ASPEN

VOL. 2

#0

COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S

FATHOM™ KIANI™

ASPEN

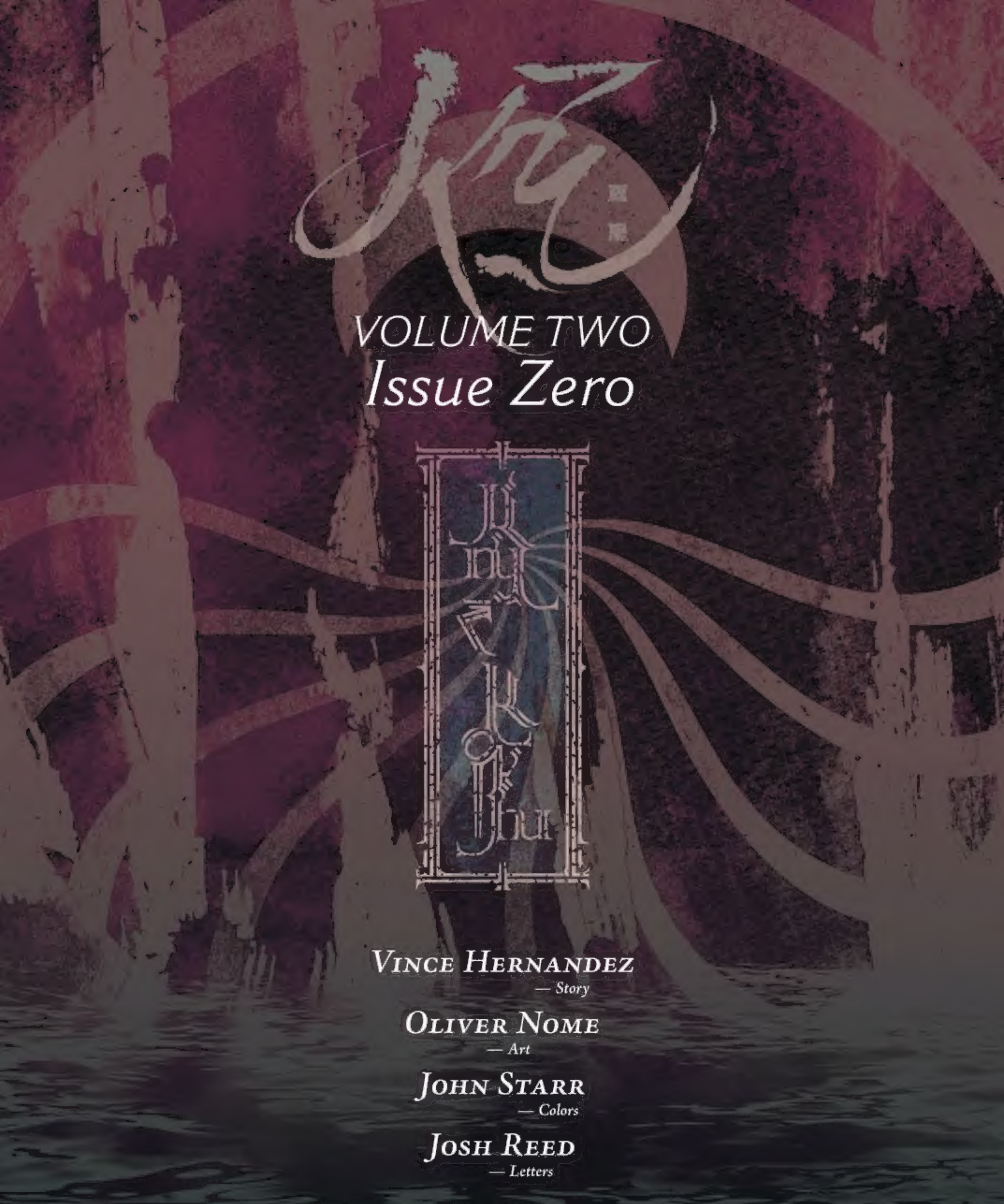
VOL. 2

#0

COVER B

MICHAEL TURNER'S

FATHOM KIANI



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MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM: KIANI™ Vol. 2 Issue 0

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The world has forever changed. The Blue, the underwater race who have remained hidden below the ocean's surface for centuries, shockingly revealed their existence to the Humans above. Amidst the chaos that ensued from a historical summit between both civilizations that would alter the landscape of the world's future, another more personal battled raged on. Aspen Matthews, the brilliant marine biologist who would become the savior of both the humans and the Blue, and Kiani, the Elite Blue warrior later scorned as a dissident, fought upon the body of their mutual ally and mentor Cannon Hawke-- who lay killed by Kiani's blade and hand. Fueled by the anger of Cannon's passing, Aspen channeled her immense Blue power and eviscerated Kiani's form in painful fashion deep at the bottom of the ocean.However, the essence of the Elite Blue exists within the sanctity of the water, where its true power thrives...

IT IS A CYCLE YOU KNOW

THEY PROVE THEMSELVES IN COMBAT.

FIGHT FOR THEIR PEOPLE FOR THEIR CAUSE.

FOR WHAT THEY FEEL IS RIGHT. THEN, EVENTUALLY,

IT WASN'T FATE.

SHE *KILLED HIM*. IN COLD BLOOD. HER LEADER. HER MENTOR.

OUR FRIEND.

THEY *ALL* RETURN TO THE BLUE.

IT DIDN'T NEED TO BE THIS WAY.

PERHAPS IT WAS FATE.

HE DIDN'T LEAVE HER MUCH CHOICE.

BECAUSE HE DIDN'T *HAVE A CHOICE* HIMSELF.

CANNON HAWKE SERVED THE BLUE AS I DO, AS WELL. OUR PURPOSE MUST BE *BEYOND* OUR OWN PREJUDICE. IF SHE HATED THE ACTIONS OF HUMANKIND SO MUCH, SHE SHOULD HAVE HELPED OUR PEOPLE IN CHANGING THEIR MINDS THROUGH PEACE *NOT* VIOLENCE.

SIPHON, HAS THERE *EVER* BEEN PEACE THAT DIDN'T INVOLVE VIOLENCE?

IS *THIS* WHAT WE'VE BECOME?

TORN AND DIVIDED. KILLING OUR OWN OVER OUR HATRED FOR THOSE ABOVE THE SURFACE? THIS *CAN'T BE* WHAT HE DIED FOR. WHAT THE CITIZENS OF SABA, AND MURIA, AND *ALL* THOSE AT THE SUMMIT-- DIED FOR.

WE NEED TO MOVE BEYOND OUR PAST DIFFERENCES IF WE EVER WISH TO CO-EXIST WITH THEM.

I DON'T DOUBT YOUR COURAGE IN THE FACE OF OPPOSITION SIPHON. THAT MUCH IS A CERTAINTY.

HOWEVER, I QUESTION THE JUDGMENT OF PLACING THE FUTURE OF OUR EXISTENCE ON AN ALLIANCE WITH THOSE WE ULTIMATELY CANNOT TRUST.

WE MUST. WE'VE COME TOO FAR TO EVER TURN BACK NOW. IF WE CAN'T MAKE PEACE WITH THE HUMANS, THERE *IS* NO GOING BACK.

BUT THIS *ISN'T* WHY YOU ASKED ME HERE, IS IT CASQUE?

I ASKED FOR YOUR PRESENCE BECAUSE THERE IS A MORE SERIOUS THREAT FOR US NOW THAN THE HUMANS.

SOMETHING WE KNEW ONE DAY WE WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH...

...AFTER ASPEN KILLED HER.

THEN.

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!

DEAD SERIOUS.

YOU'LL KILL HER!

SHE'S NOT READY FOR THIS AND YOU *KNOW IT.*

SHE *IS* READY FOR THIS.

YOU DON'T GIVE HER ENOUGH CREDIT. I KNOW SHE CAN HANDLE IT. SHE'S TOUGHER THAN EITHER OF US.

BUT HOW--

YES, YOU DO. YOU ARE MUCH SMARTER THAN ALL OF US AND YOU KNOW IT. AND ONE DAY YOUR INTELLIGENCE-- NOT YOUR FIGHTING SKILLS-- WILL RESULT IN GREAT THINGS. YOU *KNOW* HOW IMPORTANT SHE WOULD BE TO THE BLUE IF WHAT I THINK IS TRUE.

NOW IF YOU ARE DONE PLEADING WITH ME, LET'S FIND OUT WHAT THIS GIRL IS MADE OF.

--BECAUSE I KNOW HER.

LOOK, SIPHON, I'M TELLING YOU ABOUT THIS BECAUSE I CAN TRUST YOU. AND IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG, YOU WILL KNOW THAT MY TRUE INTENT IS NOT MURDER. IT IS IMPORTANT TO ME THAT SOMEONE KNOWS THE TRUE REASONS WHY.

BUT I STILL DON'T.

ARE YOU SERIOUS?

YOU CAN DO IT, TRUST ME.

OF COURSE, I TRUST YOU. IT'S JUST--

--IT SEEMS INSANE, I KNOW.

BUT YOU ARE DIFFERENT NOW. THE POWERS OF THE BLACK HEALED YOU AFTER MARQUESES STABBED YOU* AND THESE POWERS ALSO BECAME A PART OF YOU.

I... I'M NOT SURE I CAN DO THIS.

KIANI, YOU HAVE THE CHANCE TO BECOME SOMETHING *FAR GREATER* THAN I EVER COULD HAVE IMAGINED.

THERE IS SOMETHING INSIDE YOU THAT IS REMARKABLE.

SOMETHING YOU CAN USE TO DO GREAT THINGS FOR YOUR PEOPLE.

I NEED YOU TO DO THIS...

...FOR ME.

FINE.

*SEE FATHOM: DAWN OF WAR FOR DETAILS.

NOT LIKE I HAVE A FAMILY THAT'LL MISS ME ANYWAY.

SHUT IT. I WOULD MISS YOU. SO YOU'LL HAVE TO BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY THIS WILL WORK, AND YOU *WILL* BE FINE.

LET'S HOPE.

IF IT DOESN'T WORK, AT LEAST I'LL DIE IN THE WATER INSTEAD OF IN MY BED. I CAN LIVE WITH THAT.

OKAY, READY AS I'LL EVER BE.

YOU *SURE* YOU'RE READY?

JUST DO IT!

HUNGGHHHH!

FALL BACK IN! THE WATER WILL HELP!

...

...KIANI?

-!GASP!-

KIANI!

HERE! LAY DOWN.

CAN'T... UNNNGH... BREATHE!

IT IS WORKING. ALL YOUR FOCUS, KIANI. YOU CAN DO THIS.

CONCENTRATE. DIRECT YOUR FOCUS ON THE WOUND AND NOTHING ELSE!

AHHH... IT'S SO... PAINFUL!

IT'S ALMOST OVER. YOU'RE DOING IT! JUST A LITTLE MORE.

YOU'RE STRONGER THAN YOU THINK. YOU *WILL* OVERCOME!

YOU ARE... HEALING YOURSELF.

LOOK. BARELY A SCRATCH NOW.

AMAZING!

GIVE IT TIME.

I *KNEW* IT WOULD WORK. THE BLACK ARE ONE WITH THE WATER. OUR FORMS-- PART OF THE TIDES. AS YOU EXIST IN THE WATER, YOU CAN BECOME *ONE* WITH IT.

THE SCAR-- IT'S PRACTICALLY GONE.

SEE, YOU JUST HAD TO TRUST ME.

UNGGH. I DON'T FEEL AMAZING.

I HAVE A HARD TIME TRUSTING ANYONE.

THEN I TAKE IT AS A GOOD SIGN THAT YOU ALLOWED ME THIS TEST OF YOUR ABILITIES.

YET, I MUST ALSO ASK YOU FOR ONE MORE REQUEST-- A PROMISE, ACTUALLY.

WHAT NOW?

YOU MUST NEVER TELL *ANYONE* OF THIS.

IF OTHERS-- ESPECIALLY THE COUNCIL-- DISCOVER YOU CAN DO THIS, THEY WILL SEEK TO USE YOU IN WAYS YOU CAN NEVER IMAGINE. I WILL NOT ALLOW THEM TO TURN YOU INTO A WEAPON.

I GAVE YOU THIS KNOWLEDGE TO *PROTECT* YOU.

PLEASE...

Now.

WE LIED TO HER, CASQUE. WE SHOULD'VE TOLD HER I KNEW WHAT SHE COULD DO ALL ALONG.

...AND NOW YOU UNDERSTAND BETTER THE SEVERITY OF THE THREAT.

I TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECEIV NG HER. BUT NOW...WE MUST DEAL WITH HER.

-SIGH-

WITH THE ELITE BLUE POWER SURGING INSIDE HER, AND THE BLACK'S HEALING ABILITY HELPING HER REGAIN HER FORM...

...IS THERE *ANY WAY* WE CAN HOPE THAT MAYBE SHE'LL BE MORE LUCID AND WILLING TO LISTEN TO REASON?

TO BE CONTINUED...

KIANI

THE RISING TIDE

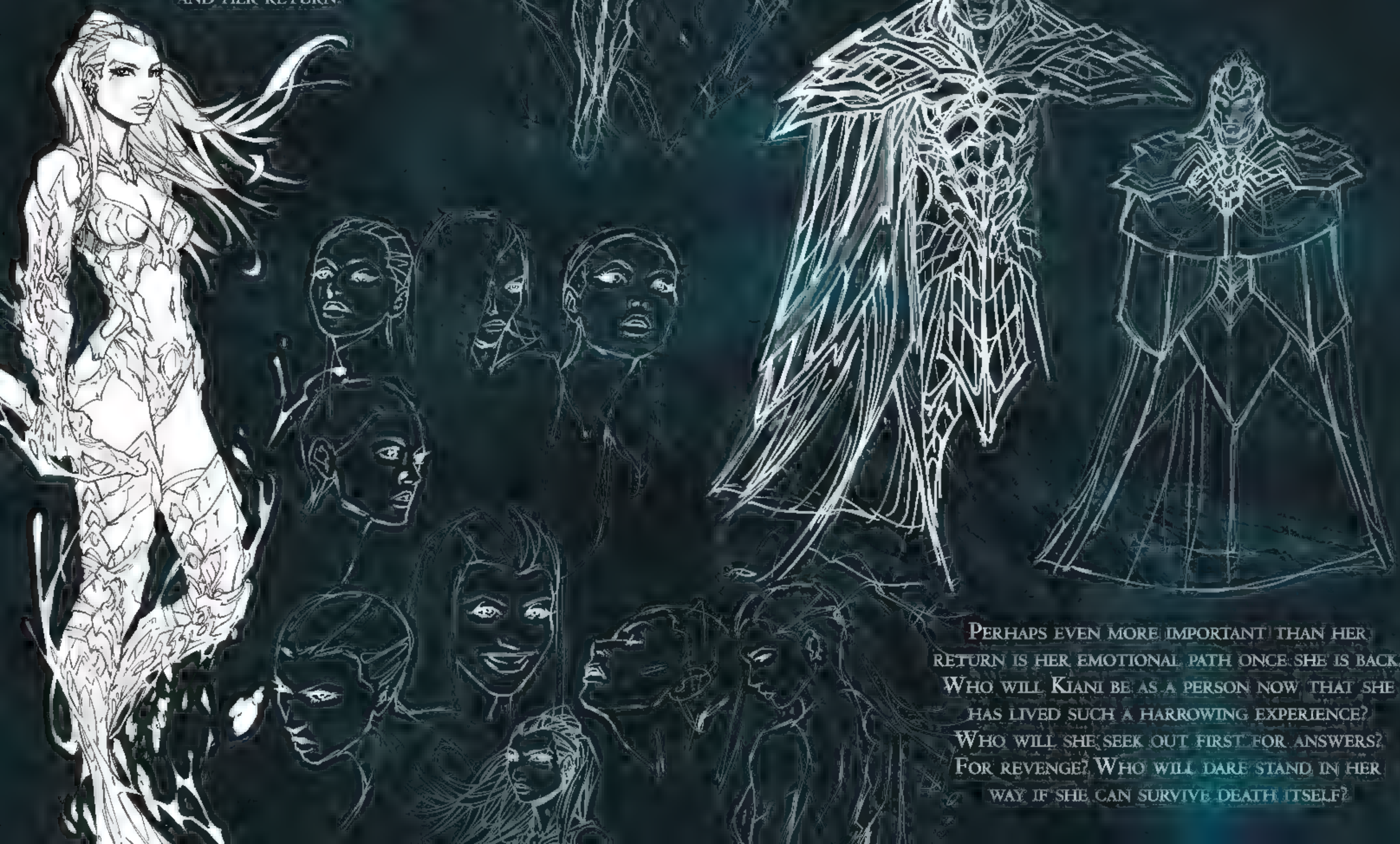
BY VINCE HERNANDEZ
WITH ARTWORK BY OLIVER NOME

THERE WERE TWO PUZZLES WE ABSOLUTELY HAD TO DECIPHER BEFORE WE SET OUT TO DELIVER THIS BRAND NEW FATHOM STORY YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS. FIRST, WE NEEDED TO FIGURE OUT JUST HOW EXACTLY KIANI, WHO WAS BRUTALLY KILLED IN A PREVIOUS STORY ARC, CAN COME BACK TO LIFE. AND SECONDLY, WE HAD TO MAKE SURE HER RETURN TO THE WORLD OF THE BLUE WAS EVEN MORE THRILLING THAN HER DEPARTURE.

SO WITH THAT IN MIND, I DECIDED THE BEST WAY TO REVEAL THESE MYSTERIES AND CHART THE COURSE FOR KIANI'S FUTURE WOULD BE TO TAKE A LOOK AT HER PAST.

Fans of the Dawn of War mini-series and the first volume of Fathom: Kiani will find specific moments and characters within those story arcs that will come back up to the surface in this second volume and become key events in Kiani's timeline and her return.

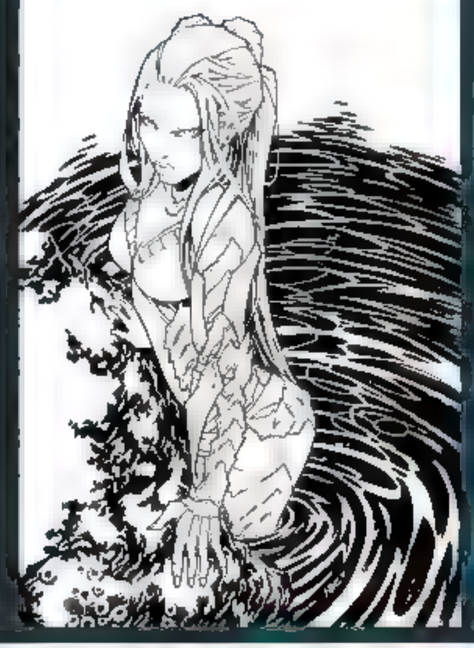
Characters such as Killian, Siphon and Anya will be making appearances, but it is their past that will be the reason they are integral to this story. They are all major players in Kiani's life—and Killian and Anya are more than that—they are family.



Perhaps even more important than her return is her emotional path once she is back. Who will Kiani be as a person now that she has lived such a harrowing experience? Who will she seek out first for answers? For revenge? Who will dare stand in her way if she can survive death itself?

You can rest assured, all of these answers and more will be revealed in this second volume of Kiani. And until issue one hits next month in April, let's all enjoy the breathtakingly-amazing sketches, designs and covers, courtesy of our series artist Oliver Nome.

ISSUE #0



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ISSUE #2

ISSUE #3

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VOLUME TWO

Issue One of Four

VINCE HERNANDEZ
— *Story*

OLIVER NOME
— *Art*

JOHN STARR
— *Colors*

JOSH REED
— *Letters*

Fathom Created by — MICHAEL TURNER

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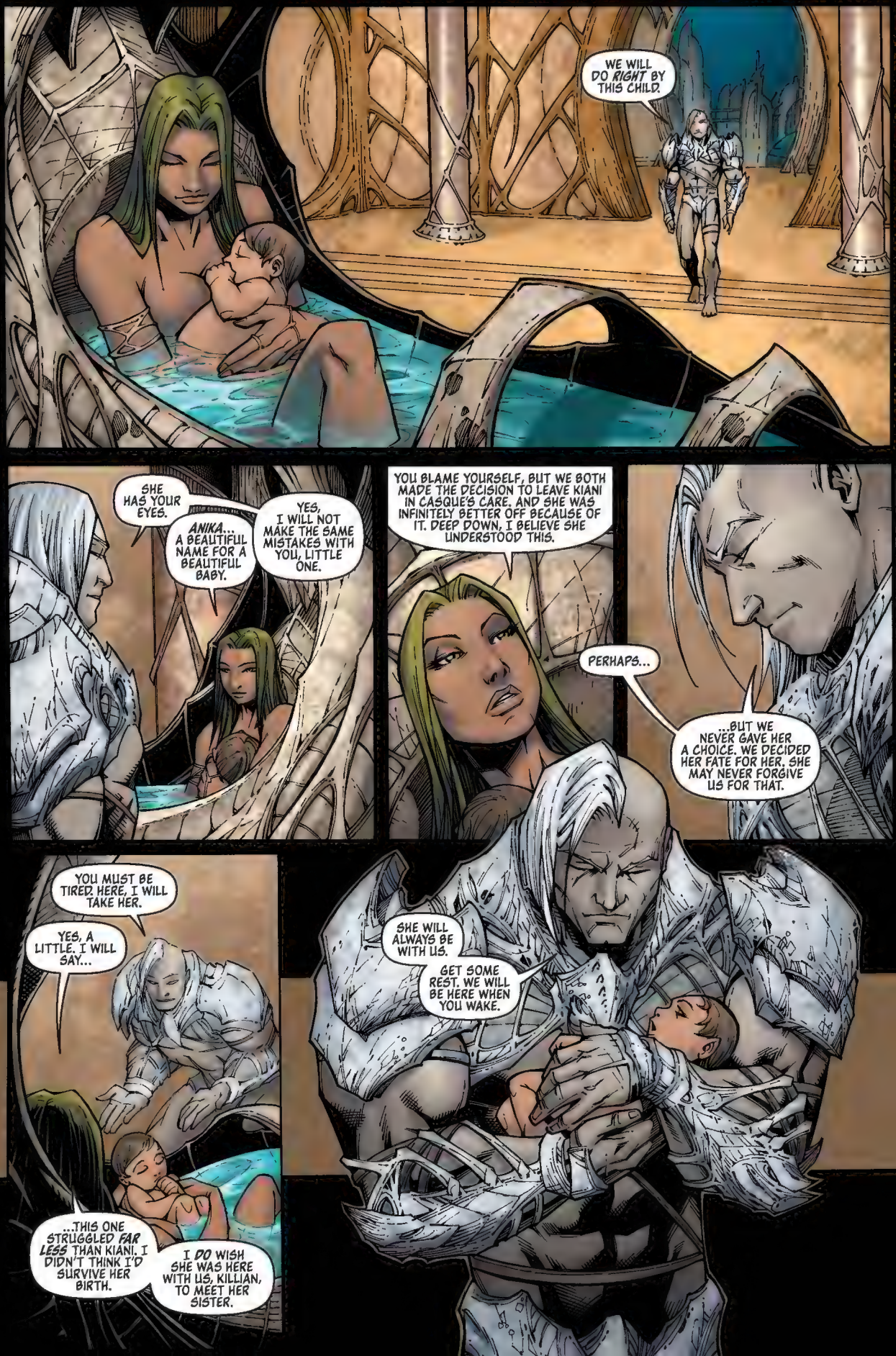
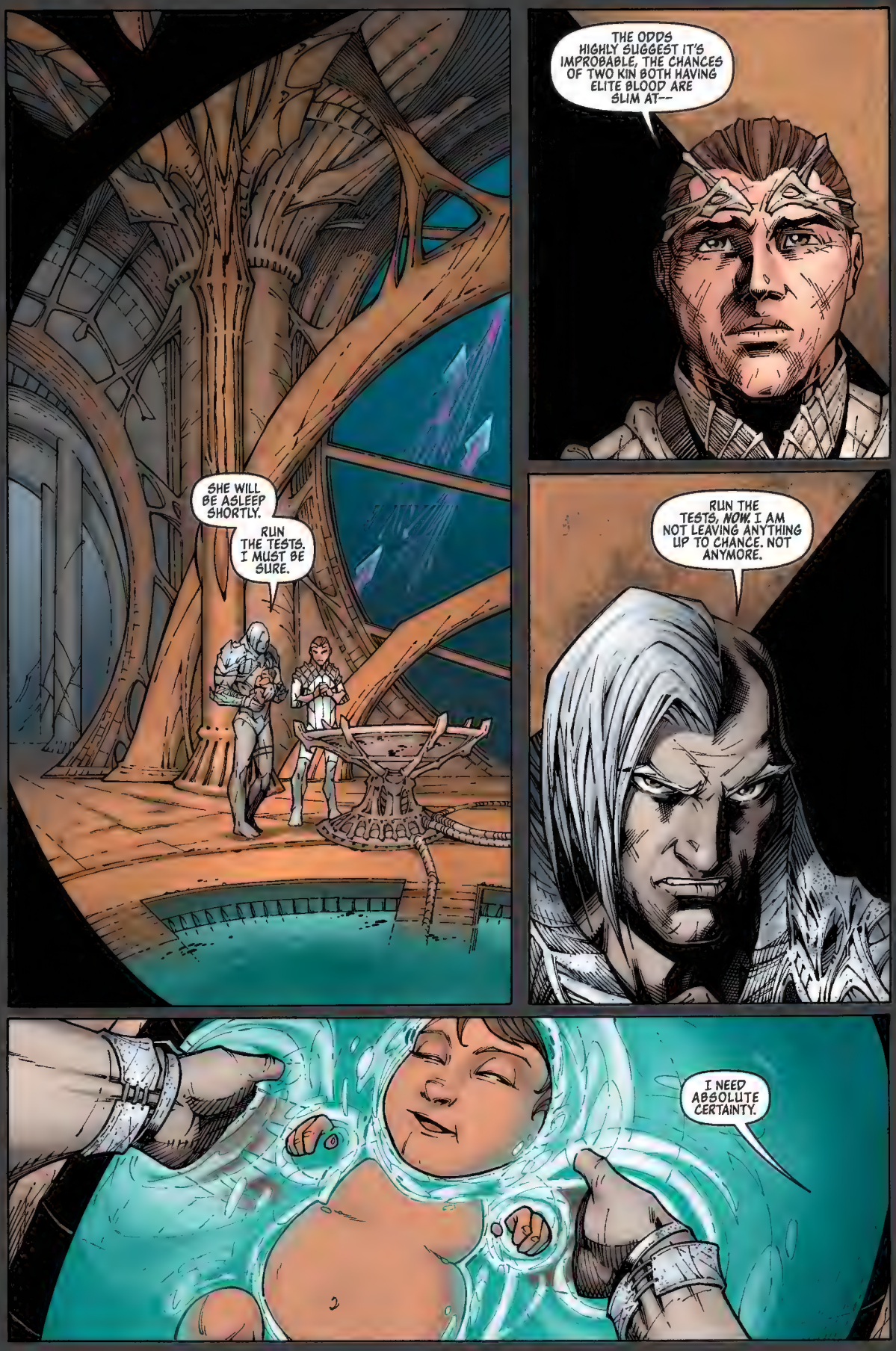
THE BLUE CAPITOL CITY OF MURIA.
ARE YOU NERVOUS?
DO YOU WANT THE TRUTH?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
THE TRUTH IS, IT IS NOT NERVES THAT GIVE ME PAUSE, ONLY A CONCERN.
BECAUSE OF WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE-- WITH KIANI.
I WOULD NOT WISH TO SEE THE SAME THING HAPPEN AGAIN.
IT WON'T, WE'VE MADE MISTAKES, BUT WHO HASN'T? WE LEARN FROM THEM AND PUSH FORWARD, AM I RIGHT?
YOU ARE.
I HAVE ALWAYS LEARNED FROM MY FAILURES. AS NUMEROUS AS THEY HAVE BEEN RECENTLY.
HOWEVER, ANYA, THIS TIME...


WE WILL DO *RIGHT* BY THIS CHILD.
SHE HAS YOUR EYES.
ANIKA... A BEAUTIFUL NAME FOR A BEAUTIFUL BABY.
YES, I WILL NOT MAKE THE SAME MISTAKES WITH YOU, LITTLE ONE.
YOU BLAME YOURSELF, BUT WE BOTH MADE THE DECISION TO LEAVE KIANI IN CASQUE'S CARE. AND SHE WAS INFINITELY BETTER OFF BECAUSE OF IT. DEEP DOWN, I BELIEVE SHE UNDERSTOOD THIS.
PERHAPS...
...BUT WE NEVER GAVE HER A CHOICE. WE DECIDED HER FATE FOR HER. SHE MAY NEVER FORGIVE US FOR THAT.
YOU MUST BE TIRED. HERE, I WILL TAKE HER.
YES, A LITTLE. I WILL SAY...
SHE WILL ALWAYS BE WITH US.
GET SOME REST. WE WILL BE HERE WHEN YOU WAKE.
...THIS ONE STRUGGLED *FAR LESS* THAN KIANI. I DIDN'T THINK I'D SURVIVE HER BIRTH.
I *DO* WISH SHE WAS HERE WITH US, KILLIAN, TO MEET HER SISTER.


SHE WILL BE ASLEEP SHORTLY.
RUN THE TESTS. I MUST BE SURE.
THE ODDS HIGHLY SUGGEST IT'S IMPROBABLE, THE CHANCES OF TWO KIN BOTH HAVING ELITE BLOOD ARE SLIM AT--
RUN THE TESTS, *NOW.* I AM NOT LEAVING ANYTHING UP TO CHANCE. NOT ANYMORE.
I NEED ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY.

THE WAR TORN CITY OF SABA.
NOTHING IS CERTAIN!
WHEN WILL THE COUNCIL TAKE CARE OF THEIR OWN?!
NO MORE PEACE WITH THE HUMAN MURDERERS!!!
QUIET! PLEASE! CITIZENS OF SABA, LET ME SPEAK!
YOUR PLEAS HAVE NOT GONE UNHEARD. I AM IN CONSTANT COMMUNICATION WITH SIPHON AND THE ELITE COUNCIL, YOU MUST TRUST ME, WE WILL RECEIVE RESTITUTIONS FROM THE HUMANS. WE WILL BE PAID BACK--THIS IS A PROMISE. I SIMPLY ASK FOR YOUR PATIENCE.
--WHEN WE HAVE RECEIVED NOTHING! EVER!
WHILE THE COUNCIL BOWS TO THE HUMANS' CALL FOR TRUCE, OUR CITY AND OUR LIVES REMAIN RUINED!
HOW CAN YOU PROMISE ANYTHING, THALASSAR--
I PROMISE YOU... THEY CANNOT IGNORE US FOREVER! IF THEY CANNOT HEAR US, THEY WILL SEE US.
BECAUSE WE ARE MORE THAN JUST A COMBINED VOICE. WE ARE A COMBINED FORCE--
--ONE THAT WILL NOT BE IGNORED!

The City of Marielle.
YOU REALLY THINK THIS PLACE IS SAFE?
ABOUT AS SAFE AS ANY GHOST TOWN, JENNINGS. NO BLUE ACTIVITY HAS BEEN REGISTERED FOR DECADES AROUND THESE PARTS. NOT HABITABLE REAL ESTATE FOR THEM SINCE THE NUKE TESTING. OR MAYBE THEY'RE AFRAID TO COME BACK, WHO KNOWS.
AH, WELL, IT STILL GIVES ME THE CREEPS.
HOW LONG YOU BEEN BELOW?
TODAY WILL BE MY THIRD FULL DAY. IT'S TAKEN ME A WHILE TO GET USED TO THE DEPTH. HOW 'BOUT YOU DR. LEVY?
FRIDAY WILL BE A MONTH. IT GETS EASIER, TRUST ME. BESIDES, IT'S NOT THE AIR PRESSURE THAT SHOULD WORRY YOU. THERE ARE FAR MORE DANGEROUS THINGS IN DEEP WATERS THAT CAN KILL YOU. ARE ALL THE PARTICULARS IN ORDER FOR THE AMBASSADOR'S ARRIVAL?
ALL SYSTEMS ARE A RESOUNDING GO, YES. WHY IS HE COMING DOWN THIS DEEP ANYWAY?
THE GOVERNMENT'S GOT SOME SORT OF SECRET PLAN FOR THIS CITY. WHAT EXACTLY-- I DON'T HAVE THE CLEARANCE TO KNOW...
...BUT IN THE MEANTIME, IT'S IMPORTANT THAT THE AMBASSADOR WORKING BETWEEN US AND THE BLUE KEEPS UP APPEARANCES. CATCH MY... UH, DRIFT? NO PUN INTENDED.
GOTCHA. EVERYTHING SHOULD BE IN ORDER FOR THE OLD MAN'S ARRIVAL.
GOOD.
BECAUSE IF I'VE LEARNED ANYTHING IN MY SHORT TIME DOWN HERE, IT'S THAT SOMETHING CAN ALWAYS GO WRONG.
DR. LEVY.

TORMO, OUR BLUE SECURITY DETAIL, IS HERE. THE AMBASSADOR'S FLEET IS APPROACHING OUR DEPTH.
SECURITY DETAIL? IT LOOKS LIKE JUST *ONE* OF YOU TO ME.
I'M ALL YOU'LL NEED.
FINE, FINE. IF YOU SAY SO. EITHER WAY, WE DON'T HAVE ANY MORE TIME. LET'S GET MOVING EVERYONE. REMEMBER, IT'S *OUR* ASSES ON THE LINE IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO HIM.
THEY'RE APPROACHING ONE NAUTICAL MILE FROM LANDING.
PLACES *EVERYONE!*
CONTROL TO HAMMERHEAD ONE. DO YOU COPY?

AFFIRMATIVE, CONTROL. MAKING OUR DESCENT NOW--
VISIBILITY IS CLOSE TO ZERO, WE'LL BE SWITCHING TO SONAR GUIDED CONTROL.
ROGER, HAMMERHEAD ONE. CONTINUE DESCENT ALONG THE PROVIDED COORDINATES. LET THE STINGRAYS GUIDE YOU IN.
YEAH, YOU HEARD THE LADY, YOU'RE ON OUR PLAYING FIELD NOW, SOLDIER.
HA, DON'T FORGET WHOSE GOT THE BIGGER SHIP, MY BLUE AMIGO. AND DON'T FORGET, I GOT ONE OF YOURS IN HERE, TOO.
I NEVER KNEW HUMANS COULD TALK SO MUCH.
WOULD YOU LADIES FOCUS ON THE DESCENT. WE'RE ALMOST--
--WHAT--?

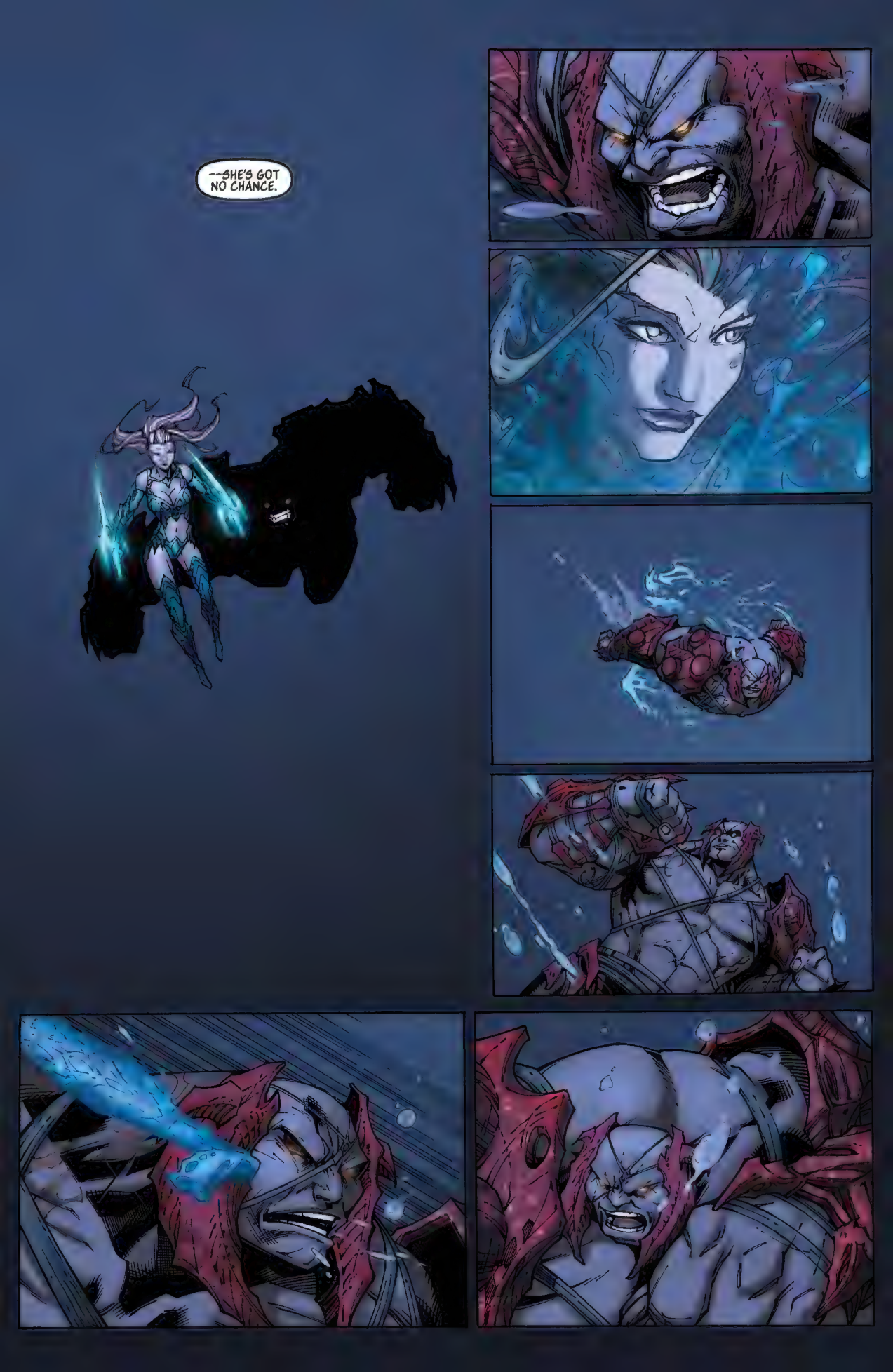
KERRBOOSH
DID YOU FEEL THAT?!
WE HAVE CONTACT!
DO YOU HAVE A VISUAL?
NEGATIVE! STINGER TWO IS DOWN!
UNDERSTOOD. MAINTAIN DEFENSIVE POSITION AT ALL COSTS.
EASIER SAID THAN DO--
--N'AAAAAAA!

DOOOM
WHAT THE HELL, MAN! WHAT IS THAT?!
OH NO..
WHAT! WHAT IS IT?
THOSE BLASTS... IT LOOKS LIKE-- NO THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE--
--SAY IT!
ONLY AN ELITE BLUE COULD CAUSE--
STINGER THREE IS HIT! HAMMERHEAD ONE, ABORT MISSION AND INCREASE ALTITUDE TO SURFACE LEVEL. I'LL ASSUME FORWARD POSITION!
FOLLOW MY LEAD!
CAPTAIN! WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON OUT THERE?
SIR, WE HAVE AN UNIDENTIFIED ENEMY. WE CAN'T GET A READ ON IT. IT'S TAKEN OUT STINGERS ONE AND TWO AHEAD OF US, AND STINGER THREE ON OUR REAR.
WE NEED TO GET THE HELL OUTTA DODGE, SIR, WHILE WE STILL HAVE ONE GOOD STINGRAY LEFT TO PROTECT US!

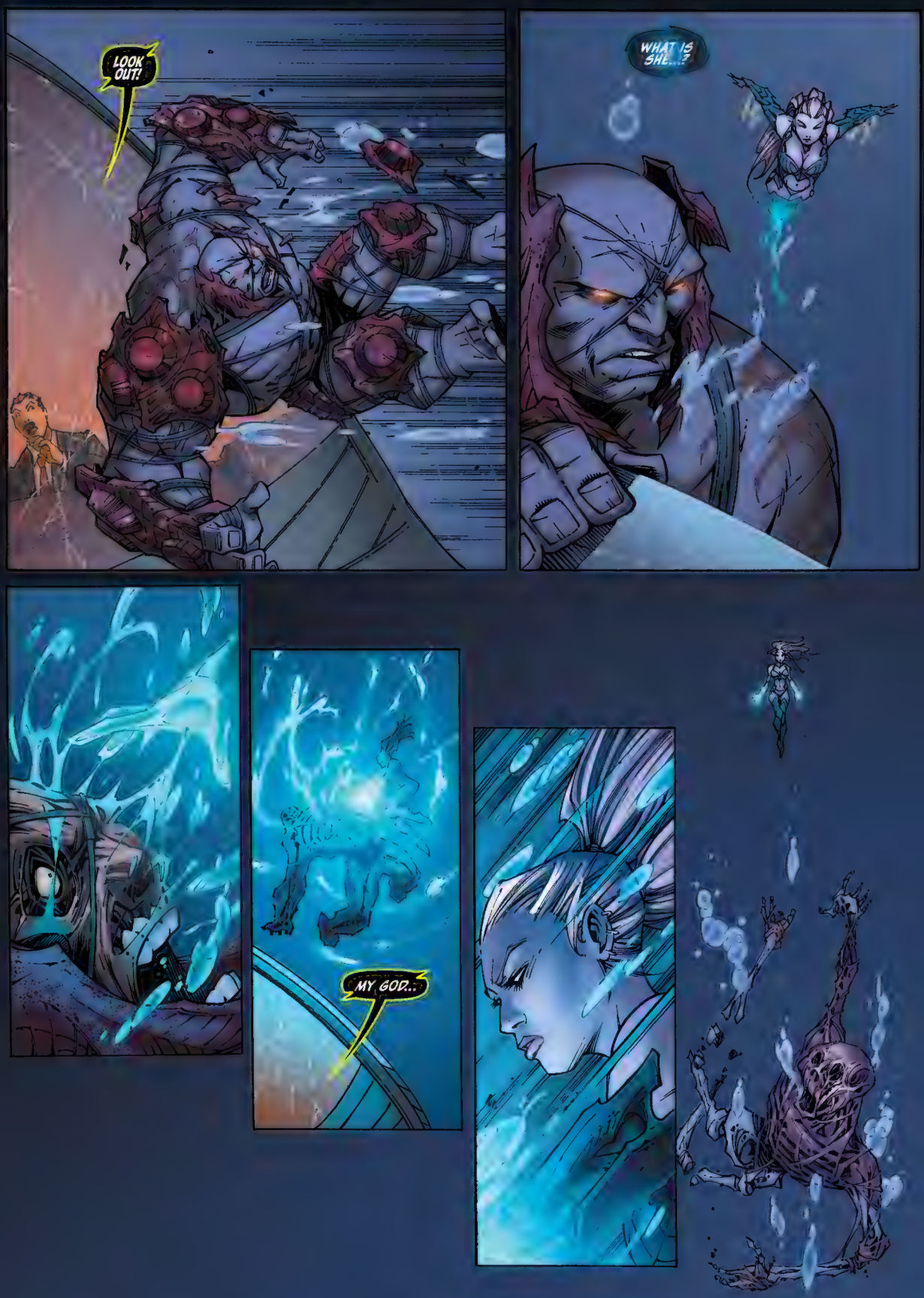
IT'S TOO LATE...
WE'RE DEAD!
GET US *OUT OF HERE* NOW! BEFORE WHATEVER'S OUT *THERE* KILLS *US* NEXT!
WAIT.
IT'S *NOT* A SHIP...
...

SHE'S ONE OF OUR KIND.

WHERE HAVE I SEEN HER BEFORE...?
WE NEED TO RISE, NOW, OR WE'RE SCREWED!
WAIT. LOOK!
HAMMERHEAD ONE, WE'VE DISPATCHED OUR SECURITY FORCE.
DUDE IS HUGE!
REMAIN ON ALERT. YOU ARE ADVISED TO DISENGAGE AND CONTINUE YOUR DESCENT TO HOME BASE IF POSSIBLE. DO YOU COPY?
UNDERSTOOD, CONTROL.
THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY'RE DEALING WITH. A SINGLE MERCENARY ISN'T ENOUGH, REGARDLESS OF SIZE.
ARE YOU KIDDING-- LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT BEAST--


--SHE'S GOT NO CHANCE.

DID YOU SEE THAT?! SHE TURNED INTO WATER! LIKE THE ONE AT THE SUMMIT!
ONLY THIS ONE'S NOT ON OUR SIDE.
NO...
WE GOTTA GET OUTTA HE--


LOOK OUT!
WHAT IS SHE...?
MY GOD...

NO...
KRRRRRK
AHHH!
FWOOOSH
NOOOO!
...PLEASE...
...I AM A BLUE...
...THANK YOU...

I'LL CALL UP TO THE SURFACE, LET THEM KNOW THERE'S BEEN A CATASTROPHE!
NO.
WHAT?! THE AMBASSADOR IS DEAD! THE ENTIRE FLEET-- GONE! WE NEED TO ALERT SOMEBODY!
JENNINGS--
--IT'S NOT OVER... RUN!
CRAAAAAAASH

-GASP!-
UNNNGHHH...
UNNGH... WHY... WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?
WHY?
THERE'S NO ANSWER FOR THAT QUESTION, HUMAN.
IT'S THE WAY IT MUST BE.
YOU WILL THANK ME.
NOT IN THIS LIFE, BUT IN ANOTHER. UNDERSTAND-- WE ARE ALL REBORN AT SOME POINT.
WHAT YOU SEE BEFORE YOU IS MY REBIRTH. I WAS ONCE LIKE YOU.
CONFUSED.
AFRAID.
MORTAL.

THAT WAS A LIFETIME AGO.
BEFORE I *DIED.*
OR RATHER-- WAS KILLED. BUT NOW... NOW I UNDERSTAND WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.
THROUGH DEATH... I SAW *LIGHT.*
I WITNESSED THE FUTURE. *MY PEOPLE,* THE BLUE, HAND-IN-HAND, TAKING BACK WHAT IS OURS. TAKING THIS WORLD FOR OUR *OWN...*
...AS IT ALWAYS SHOULD HAVE BEEN.
AND IN THIS DIVINE RADIANCE, I DID *NOT* SEE THE HUMAN RACE.
WE CAN... WORK TOGETHER. PLEASE... SAVE... *UNNGH...* ME...
I'M SORRY.
THERE WILL NEVER BE A BLISSFUL UNION BETWEEN OUR KIND AND YOURS. HUMANS ARE NOT CAPABLE OF PEACE.
THE BLUE ARE OUR ALLIES NOW, THEY -:COUGH:- WILL STOP YOU--!
SOME ARE YOUR ALLIES. YES, BUT, I AM NOT ALONE...

AND WE HAVE RETURNED FOR WHAT IS OURS.
TO BE CONTINUED...

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THE CITY OF MARIELLE.

KIANI, A MOMENT IF POSSIBLE?

YES, QARB. WHAT IS IT?

THE PERIMETER OF THE CITY HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. OUR SENTRIES CONTROL ALL THE CHOKE POINTS, AS WELL. REFUGEES ARE ARRIVING BY THE DOZENS TO JOIN OUR CAUSE, AND OUR SECURITY DETAILS ARE CHECKING EVERYONE COMING IN THOROUGHLY FOR SPIES.

GOOD WORK.

YOU KNOW, WE CAN FIND SOMEONE ELSE TO DO THIS TASK FOR YOU. I'M SURE YOU HAVE MORE IMPORTANT MATTERS TO ATTEND TO.

WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS THAT OUR PEOPLE ARE TAKEN CARE OF FIRST. WE MUST BE PREPARED FOR A LONG ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COUNCIL.

WITHOUT THE PROPER PROVISIONS AND PLANNING, WE'D DEFEAT OURSELVES. AND NO ONE PERSON AMONGST US IS ABOVE LENDING A HAND TO THIS CAUSE.

WISELY SAID, KIANI--

--OUR FEARLESS LEADER-- TOILING WITH HER PEOPLE, TELL ME, BOSS...

WHY ARE WE NOT *TAKING* THE FIGHT TO THE COUNCIL, BEFORE THEY HAVE A CHANCE TO STRIKE DOWN UPON US WITH ALL OF THEIR MIGHT?

SURELY, THERE ARE INSTALLATIONS WE CAN HIT THAT WOULD WEAKEN THEIR APPROACH? PUT THEM ON THEIR HEELS.

HAVE YOU NOT LEARNED ANYTHING FROM THE PAST TRANSGRESSIONS OF OUR KIND?

OF OUR *OWN* ACTIONS EVEN?

THEY WILL COME. AND, WE WILL PREPARE OURSELVES, AND *WAIT.* REALIZE THAT OUR PATIENCE IS NOT OUR VULNERABILITY-- BUT THEIRS. FOR, WERE ARE OF THE BLUE, AND IF THEY ARE FOOLISH ENOUGH TO ATTACK US-- *THEIR OWN KIND*-- FIRST... WELL, THEN...

...IT WILL ONLY ADD TO OUR STRENGTH AMONGST THE PEOPLE.

THE WAR TORN CITY OF SABA.

OUR CITY IS *CRUMBLING*, SIPHON!

WHEN IS IT ENOUGH? WHEN THERE IS *NOTHING* LEFT FOR ME TO RESIDE OVER?

MY AIDES TELL ME MORE OF OUR CITIZENS HAVE MIGRATED TO HER CAUSE.

WE CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE MORE PEOPLE TO HER! WE ARE ALREADY IN THE MIDST OF REBUILDING OUR CITY FROM THE HUMAN'S ATTACK.

THE FEW CITIZENS WHO REMAIN ARE SHOOK TO THEIR CORE!

WE MUST PRACTICE PATIENCE, THALASSA— WE MOVE TO ACTION TOO SOON, WE RISK A FULL-SCALE CATASTROPHE.

THESE ARE OUR OWN PEOPLE REMEMBER-- KIANI; IS ONLY ONE OF THE ELITE COUNCIL MEMBERS TO CONSIDER THE CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH AN ATTACK BEFORE MOVING TO STRIKE.

OUR POPULACE IS ALREADY SWAYED TO HER SIDE BY OUR DECISION TO ALIGN WITH THE HUMANS. THIS COULD DESTROY THE FRAGILE BALANCE OF THE PEOPLE'S OPINION.

IS *THAT* WHAT THIS *IS* FOR YOU, SIPHON, THE PEOPLE'S VOTE? PETTY POLITICS? *LISTEN TO YOURSELF!*

NO-- IT IS *YOU* WHO WOULD BE WISE TO LISTEN, *FOR ONCE.*

I UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERNS, MORE THAN YOU WOULD BELIEVE, BUT YOUR CHOICES ARE DICTATED BY YOUR OWN RASH EMOTIONS, NOT THE INTEREST OF YOUR PEOPLE.

YOU WANT TO HASTEN INTO MARIELLE, WEAPONS [illegible] WITH THE ASSUMP[illegible] OF VIOLENCE AGAINST [illegible] AND THESE DISSIDE[illegible] WILL SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF BABA

...IT WILL NOT. IN FACT, IT WILL FURTHER YOUR DISTRE[illegible] TRUST IN THAT. THE BLUE [illegible] STAND FOR ACTIONS [illegible] OUR OWN-- NOT FROM [illegible] COUNCIL-- NOT NOW. THE CLIMATE IS TOO UNSTABLE.

I'M [illegible]RRY.

BUT, I WILL *NOT* STAND IDLE WHILE OUR CITY CRUMBLES AROUND US. I MUST MAKE A STAND-- FOR MY PEOPLE.

THA[illegible]BAR, W[illegible]

FORGET IT, SIPHON. MEET WITH *YOUR* COUNCIL.

AS AM I.

WAIT... DON'T DO ANYTHING... STUPID.

CURIA. ELITE COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS.

TRY TO GET HIM BACK ON THE CHANNEL. WE CAN'T LET SABA INFLUENCE THIS DILEMMA. THEY'RE TOO INVESTED, EMOTIONALLY.

YES, SIR.

CONTROL IS A MYSTERIOUS ENTITY, IS IT NOT? WE RARELY FEEL ITS WORTH UNTIL IT IS BEING WRESTLED FROM OUR GRASP.

IT'S NOT LIKE THAT, ALCER.

THALASSAR HAS A POINT. HIS CITY IS DEPENDENT ON US FOR SUPPORT-- YET HERE WE FIGHT OUR OWN BATTLE FOR PUBLIC OPINION.

YOU COULD ASK THE HYBRID FOR HELP, THE GIRL, ASPEN MATTHEWS.

IT'S NOT AN OPTION. SHE HAS DISAPPEARED ABOVE THE SURFACE.

AND BESIDES, THE HUMANS WILL BE SEEKING ANSWERS FOR THE ASSASSINATION OF THEIR AMBASSADOR--

--ONES I CANNOT PROVIDE FOR THEM.

THEY ALSO LACK THE UNDERSTANDING AND FORESIGHT TO SEE WHAT ATTACKING KIANI AND HER DISSIDENTS WOULD DO TO OUR ENTIRE CIVILIZATION.

YET, THERE IS *SOMEONE* WHO MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP US.

THE CITY OF MARIELLE.

THEY COME TO US IN DROVES, AND I BEGIN TO ASK MYSELF--

--IS THIS THE BEGINNING OF HOW IT WILL ALL END FOR ME?

SURROUNDED BY HUNDREDS OF MY FELLOW BLUE DEVOTED TO MY CAUSE, FIGHTING FOR A BETTER LIFE? LOOKING FOR SOLACE FROM A CIVILIZATION THAT HAS TURNED ITS BACK ON THEM?

THEY HAVE PUT THEIR LIVES IN OUR POSSESSION.

IN MY POSSESSION.

THE SIMPLE GESTURE SHE IS MAKING IS A LONG-LOST SYMBOL OF MARIELLE'S STRENGTH OF UNITY.

AS A PEOPLE, WE ARE ONE...

...AND OUR POWER IS IN OUR UNITY.

YET, FEW HERE KNOW THAT MY OWN POWER IS FAR MORE THAN ANY BLUE COULD IMAGINE.

AND NOW, I'M FINALLY ABLE TO CONTROL IT.

LUCEEN, ANY MOVEMENT OUTSIDE OUR PERIMETER?

NONE YET, KIANI.

THEY'RE COMING. KEEP WATCH.

ON IT. NOTHING'S GETTING IN UNLESS WE SEE IT FIRST.

HEY...

...YOU SPOKE TOO SOON. COME TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.

WE HAVE AN INCOMING VESSEL IN OUR SECTOR THREE--

--AND BY THE LOOKS OF IT, SOMETHING BIG.

CAN YOU GET US A VISUAL?

YES, JUST NEED TO NAIL DOWN ITS SONAR COORDINATES... AND...

...DONE.

-:SIGH.:-

MAINTAIN YOUR POSITIONS. I'LL HANDLE THIS.

I KNEW THEY'D COME.

IT'S THE ONLY THING OUR PEOPLE CAN DO EFFECTIVELY THESE DAYS-- KILL OUR OWN.

...I AM NO DIFFERENT.

THE TRUTH IS...

I ONCE KILLED FOR THEIR MOTIVES AS WELL; NOT MY FELLOW BLUE, BUT HUMANS. MANY OF THEM.

NOW, I AM FORCED TO KILL MY OWN KIND TO ADVANCE OUR CAUSE. TO PROTECT THE FUTURE OF THE PEOPLE-- OUR PEOPLE-- WHO HAVE CHOSEN TO RESIST THE OPPRESSION OF A MISGUIDED COUNCIL.

HOWEVER, IT MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO ME ANYMORE.

EVEN DEATH IS NO LONGER FINITE TO ME.

cHOOM

FOOLS...

...THE MARKINGS ON THE WARSHIP-- I'D RECOGNIZE ANYWHERE. THIS IS FROM SABA'S FLEET. WHICH MEANS...

...THALASSAR IS BEHIND THIS. HE SENT THEM.

MY OLD BROTHER-IN-ARMS. WE FOUGHT TOGETHER ONCE, NOT TOO LONG AGO, AGAINST THE HUMANS.

I SHED BLOOD TO PROTECT HIS CITY.

NOW, HE HAS TURNED HIS CITY AGAINST ME.

I CONCENTRATE ALL THE WATER AROUND ME TO IMMENSELY SOLID LEVELS. IT DOESN'T SLOW ME DOWN NOR DO I FEEL A THING AS MY SPEED PROPELS ME THROUGH THE SHIP NOT ONCE, BUT TWICE.

I KNOW IT IS ENOUGH.

WHILE OUR CAUSE IS ADVANCED, MY HEART STILL SKIPS A BEAT AT KILLING MY OWN BROTHERS AND SISTERS. I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER— HAD I ONCE SHED BLOOD WITH THESE PILOTS AS WELL?

AMAZING.

SHE IS OUR SAVIOR.

NO ONE WILL SAVE YOU-- REBEL.

YOUR LEADER SHOULD HAVE TAUGHT YOU PROPER DEFENSE TACTICS. HER MISTAKE JUST COST YOU YOUR LIVES.

SHOOT THEM!

HRAAA!

KTCHOOM

KTCHOOM

AIIIIIEEE!

HUNHH-!

NO-- WAIT!!!

TO THEIR HEADQUARTERS! FIND HER!

THE BLUE CAPITOL CITY OF MURIA.

THIS IS... NOT WHAT I EXPECTED.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW HOME, SIPHON.

CAN I GET YOU ANYTHING, YOUR MAJESTY?

PLEASE, ANYA. I STILL FIND IT DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT SUCH GREETINGS.

SIPHON-- IT IS YOUR RIGHT, AND HONOR. AND WE ARE TRUE LOYALISTS TO THE COUNCIL-- NO MATTER WHAT OUR PAST ACTIONS WOULD HAVE OUR COLLEAGUES STATE.

OUR PAST ACTIONS WERE *BECAUSE* OF OUR LOYALTY TO THIS LAND. SIPHON KNOWS THIS BETTER THAN ANYONE. HE KNOWS THE RIGHT ANSWER IS NOT ALWAYS IN LINE WITH WHAT THE GREATER POPULACE DEEMS ACCEPTABLE.

BUT I TAKE IT YOU DIDN'T COME HERE FOR A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE. COME, CHECK OUT THE VIEW, AND YOU CAN DETAIL WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE... SIR.

THERE, THERE...

--AND THAT IS WHY I COME TO YOU, FOR MAYBE YOUR PARENTAL AUTHORITY CAN HELP SHOW HER THAT WHAT SHE'S DOING IS ALL WRONG.

SIPHON, YOU KNOW HOW MY DAUGHTER CAN BE. HER FORGIVENESS... I DO NOT SEE IN MY IMMEDIATE FUTURE-- NOT AFTER I FOUGHT ALONGSIDE ASPEN AND THE HUMANS.

HOW I STILL WISH MY WORDS HELD ANY SWAY OVER HER ACTIONS. FOR I WOULD TELL HER TO FOR ONCE TAKE PAUSE, AND THINK ABOUT WHAT DOMINANT POWER SHE HAS-- AND WHAT IT CAN TRULY ACCOMPLISH.

BUT SHE IS TOO FAR GONE, EVEN FOR MY COUNCIL. MY ARRIVAL IN THIS INCIDENT WOULD ONLY STEM FURTHER ROOTS OF CHAOS AND A TERRIBLE HISTORY BETWEEN US. I AM... SORRY, SIPHON.

BUT, I MUST MAKE AMENDS WITH THE PRESENT.

KIANI!

SHE'S DEAD!

LUCEEN AND HER TEAM!

THE WARSHIP WAS JUST A DECOY FOR A STRIKE TEAM. STUPID OF ME NOT TO SEE IT. THALASSAR IS NOT KEEN ON CHANGE, INCLUDING HIS OLD TACTICS. WE MUST FIND--

KABOOM

YOU'RE CORRECT, *DISSIDENT.*

I ONCE THOUGHT YOU WISE, KIANI. YOU FOUGHT BY MY SIDE, DO YOU REMEMBER? OR IS YOUR MEMORY CLOUDED BY YOUR INSANITY?! YOU WERE AS A SISTER TO ME!

I *WAS* ONCE AS YOUR SISTER-- AND I *AM* WISE, THALASSAR.

MORE SO THAN *YOU* WILL EVER BE ABLE TO COMPREHEND.

ENOUGH! YOU'RE COMING WITH US TO *PAY* FOR YOUR CRIMES AGAINST THE PEOPLE!

IS THIS CLOSE ENOUGH? *NOW*, CAN WE FINALLY PLAY?

BY ALL MEANS.

I HOPE YOU ALSO BROUGHT THE COUNCIL'S FINEST WEAPONRY, SOLDIERS. I ENJOY AN EVEN FIGHT!

KRAAASH

IS *THIS* ALL THE MIGHTY ELITE COUNCIL CAN MUSTER?

THIS ISN'T A PROPER COUNCIL RESPONSE. YOU'RE UNDERMANNED, AND CAME HERE OF YOUR OWN VOLITION. PUT YOUR MEN UP FOR CERTAIN DOOM.

PATIENCE WAS NEVER YOUR STRONG SUIT.

MY PATIENCE WORE OUT FOR YOU WHEN MY COMMANDER-- *MY FRIEND*-- CANNON HAWKE DREW HIS LAST BREATH!

LIKE I SAID, YOUR COMPREHENSION OF MY ACTIONS WILL NEVER SERVE FOR OUR ALIGNMENT.

BETTER TO SEVER OUR TIES *NOW*, THEN.

UNNNNH!

KRAKOOM

WOW. BE GRATEFUL YOU GOT *ME* AND NOT HER.

YOU CAN'T DEFEAT ME, THALASSAR. NOT WITH A HUNDRED SOLDIERS.

I'M AN ELITE BLUE.

WITH THE HEALING OF THE BLACK COURSING THROUGH ME, AS WELL.

DO YOU ***KNOW*** WHAT THAT MEANS?

IT MEANS YOU ARE NO LONGER ONE OUR KIND-- AND YOU MUST BE STOPPED.

THALASSAR, PLEASE. I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU--

I *CANNOT!*

UNNNGH!

NO!!!

WHAT HAVE YOU...?

YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO--

HE WAS MAKING A MOVE. I WAS *PROTECTING* YOU.

WHATEVER. HE ASKED FOR IT.

NOW, SIPHON HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO RESPOND IN FORCE.

IF YOU'RE FOOLISH ENOUGH TO BELIEVE I NEEDED HELP, YOU MAY AS WELL LEAVE MARIELLE ALSO. YOUR STUPIDITY WOULD BE A DEFICIENCY TO US IN THE COMING TIDES. YOUR ACTION WILL PROMPT THEM ALL TO COME.

To be continued...

ASPEN
VOL. 2
#3
OF 4
COVER A
MICHAEL TURNER'S
FATHOM
KIANI

ASPEN
VOL. 2
#3
OF 4
COVER B
MICHAEL TURNER'S
FATHOM
KIANI
Sotelo

VOLUME TWO

Issue Three of Four

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MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM: KIANI™ Vol. 2 Issue 3

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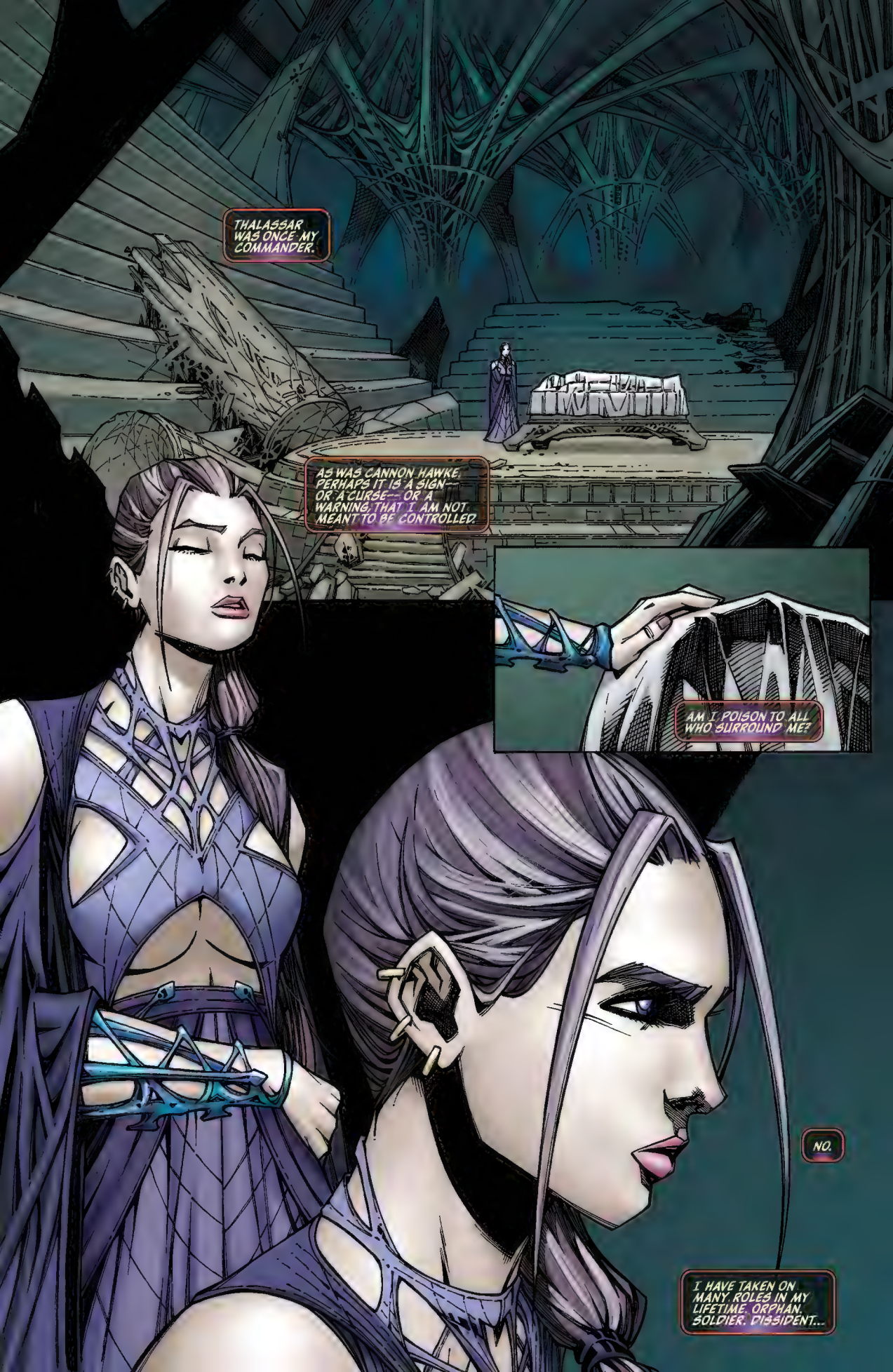
THALASSAR WAS ONCE MY COMMANDER.
AS WAS CANNON HAWKE. PERHAPS IT IS A SIGN— OR A CURSE— OR A WARNING, THAT I AM NOT MEANT TO BE CONTROLLED.
AM I POISON TO ALL WHO SURROUND ME?
NO.
I HAVE TAKEN ON MANY ROLES IN MY LIFETIME. ORPHAN. SOLDIER. DISSIDENT...

YET, NEVER HAVE I BEEN A LEADER.

CITIZENS OF MARIELLE, FORGIVE ME. I AM NOT ONE FOR ORATORY SKILLS, MY TALENTS ARE THAT OF A WARRIOR IN BATTLE...

...MOST OF YOU LACK KNOWLEDGE OF WHO THIS PERSON IS. HIS NAME WAS *THALASSAR*. AND HE WAS AS OUR BROTHER.

THIS IS WHAT THE ELITE COUNCIL WILL HAVE US BECOME. MURDERERS OF OUR OWN.
STRIPPED OF ANY CHOICE BUT VIOLENCE UPON ONE ANOTHER. *THIS* IS THE RESULT OF THEIR COURSE OF ACTION WITH THE HUMANS--- DEATH.
AND I WILL NOT HAVE IT AS SUCH!
WE WILL RISE ABOVE THEM AND RECLAIM THE CIVILIZATION OF THE BLUE AS ONE. MY RESOLVE IS NEVER STRONGER. AND I ASK THAT YOURS REMAIN FIRM AS WELL. TOGETHER, WE CAN TAKE BACK WHAT IS OURS BY RIGHT!
YEAH!
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
FREEDOM!
CLAP
CLAP
AN AUDITORIUM IS THE RIGHT SETTING FOR THIS FARCE. IS IT NOT A JOKE TO MOURN ONE WHO SOUGHT TO *KILL US?*
KIANI IS A KEEN LEADER. SHE KNOWS THE REFUGEES DO NOT SEEK VIOLENCE BUT A BETTER LIFE. THIS CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED THROUGH COMPASSION, ERGON.
I DID NOT SIGN UP FOR COMPASSION, GARD... NOR *THIS.*

THE BLUE CAPITOL CITY OF MURIA.
IT IS NOT YOUR CONCERN.
OF COURSE IT IS. KIANI IS OUR DAUGHTER-- AND SHE IS ALIVE.
AND SHE IS AN ADULT--
--UNLIKE YOUR NEWBORN. THIS ONE NEEDS A FATHER, KILLIAN. HAVE YOU NOT LEARNED ANYTHING FROM OUR PAST ACTIONS? IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO YOU--
--WAAAAAHH!
THERE, THERE.
IT IS NOT LOST ON ME, ANYA, TRUST IN THAT. YET, AM I TO ABANDON KIANI IN FAVOR OF ANOTHER ONCE AGAIN? AM I NEVER TO BE THE FATHER TO HER AS I SHOULD BE, EVEN AS THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAVE HER PRESENTS ITSELF?
I DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT KILLIAN...
...HOWEVER, IF YOU ABANDON THIS ONE NOW, WILL THIS CYCLE OF PAIN EVER END?

CURIA, ELITE COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS.
SIPHON...
...YOU KNOW, WE MUST MAKE A DECISION REGARDING THE DISSIDENT.
WHAT DO I KNOW, ALCER? NOTHING THAT HAS SET OUR COURSE RIGHT FROM THE START.
COMMANDER THALASSAR HAS BEEN SLAIN IN MARIELLE. OUR SPIES CONFIRM IT.
YOU HAVE INTEL WITHIN MARIELLE?
OF COURSE, IS IT NOT THE CORRECT PROTOCOL IN SUCH EVENTS? TO PLACE ONE OF OURS AMONGST THEM FOR INTELLIGENCE?
ALL I EVER SEEK TO DO IS THE RIGHT THING, YET ALL I HAVE KNOWN IS FAILURE.
I KNOW THALASSAR WAS AS A FATHER TO YOU. SO I WILL NOT MINCE PETTY WORDS TO ASSUAGE YOU...
...HOWEVER, I WILL REMIND YOU THAT YOUR DUTY IS NOT TO HIM, OR I, OR THE ELITE COUNCIL.
YOUR DUTY LIES OUT THERE. TO THEM...
...AND IT IS YOUR ACTIONS NOW THAT WILL DECIDE YOUR LEGACY.

THEY WILL COME.
THALASSAR WAS A COMMANDER OF A MAJOR BLUE CITY-- AS WELL AS SIPHON'S CLOSE FRIEND.
HE AND THE ELITE COUNCIL, THEIR ARMY, THE FULL MIGHT OF THE BLUE WILL PRESS DOWN UPON THIS CITY. THEY WILL BE UNIFIED IN THEIR RESPONSE.
UNFORTUNATELY, I CANNOT SAY THE SAME FOR OUR FORCE.
YOUR HAIR. IT HAS CHANGED?
WHEN I WAS YOUNGER AND ALONE UNDER CASQUE'S CARE, MY HAIR, IT LOOKED AS SUCH.
YET, WHEN I BECAME A BLUE SOLDIER-- I BANISHED THE APPEARANCE.
NOW, WITH THALASSAR GONE, IT FEELS FITTING.
YOU SPOKE OF YOUR FRIENDSHIP TO THALASSAR AS A FRIEND, BUT DID NOT CALL OUT THE NAME OF LUCEEN? OUR OWN FALLEN?
LUCEEN WAS HONORED IN KIND AS WELL.
YET NOT WITH SUCH GRANDEUR.
THERE WERE REASONS BEHIND THE WORDS ACCOMPANYING HIS FUNERAL...
...ONES THAT WOULD INSPIRE.
I GROW TIRED OF YOUR ACCUSATIONS AND COMPLAINTS, ERGON.
AS DO I. YOU ARE NOT FIT TO COMMAND US.
WE NEED A LEADER WHO IS UNDETERRED BY THE THREAT OF ACTION-- OF SACRIFICE.
WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF SACRIFICE?

MY ENTIRE LIFE HAS BEEN FORGED FROM SACRIFICE.
WATCH YOUR STEP, WOMAN.
I HAVE FORFEITED ANY SEMBLANCE OF A NORMAL LIFE FOR OTHERS. FOR MY PEOPLE. FOR ALL OF YOU.
CAN YOU OFFER BETTER?
WORDS. THAT'S ALL YOU SPEAK. I WILL PROVE MY SUPERIORITY!
THEN PROVE IT!
HRAAAA!

WHAT?
YOUR CANNON SHOOTS CONCENTRATED WATER, SURELY YOU KNEW THAT?
I IMAGINE THERE IS MUCH YOU ARE IGNORANT OF WHEN IT COMES TO WATER...
...AND AN ELITE BLUE.

WE ARE ONE WITH THE WATER IN A WORLD *SURROUNDED BY* SUCH.
THE MORE POWERFUL OF OUR KIND CAN MANIPULATE IT... DIRECT IT...
...CONTROL IT.
PLEASE...!
I... *UNGHH*... MEANT--
YOU MEANT TO KILL ME. TO TAKE *YOUR* PLACE AS THE RIGHTFUL HEIR TO THIS MOVEMENT.
NO!
BUT, I WILL FORGIVE YOU FOR YOUR MISGUIDED ACTIONS. YOU WERE ILL INFORMED OF WHAT I AM.
NOW YOU KNOW.

MURIA, ELITE COUNCIL CHAMBER ROOM.
--IT REQUIRES A SHOW OF FORCE, SIPHON.
I CONCUR.
MY FELLOW COUNCIL MEMBERS, I HAVE EXHAUSTED ALL POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR RESPONSE, AND MY DECISION NOW IS TO FIGHT FIRE WITH FIRE. KIANI WAS ONCE A DEAR FRIEND AND FELLOW SOLDIER, BUT HER ACTIONS UP TO THIS POINT HAVE DISSOLVED THE PEACE AMONGST US.
OUR OWN COURSE MUST BE TO ELIMINATE HER, AT ALL COSTS.
NO...
...BECAUSE I AM GOING INTO MARIELLE ALONE.
SHE WILL NOT GO PEACEFULLY. WILL THE COUNCIL'S ARMY BE PREPARED FOR SUCH A RESPONSE?
WHAT?!?
YOU CANNOT!

LATER...
I NEED STEALTH NOT ARMOR, MAKE SURE IT'S FITTED FOR SILENCE.
SIPHON--
--YOU CANNOT PLACE YOURSELF IN SUCH DANGER-- THE COUNCIL WILL NOT ALLOW IT.
I AM IN CHARGE OF THE COUNCIL, ALCER.
AND WE ARE WELL AWARE OF THIS. YET, WHY DO YOU CHALLENGE OUR RANK AND ASSEMBLY BY RISKING YOURSELF SO?
IF I DO NOTHING, THE COUNCIL MAY AS WELL BE NOTHING. THE PEOPLE EXPECT US-- ME TO DO SOMETHING!
SEND A FLEET. SEND THE ENTIRE ARMY IF NEED-BE. BUT, THIS... IS SUICIDE.
DON'T YOU GET IT? IF WE ANNIHILATE KIANI AND HER PEOPLE, WE RISK EVERYTHING. REPRISALS FOR THALASSAR AND HIS DEATH WILL NOT OVERSHADOW US SLAUGHTERING SCORES OF OUR OWN. KIANI'S CAUSE WILL ONLY BE STRENGTHENED.
YET, IF I GO ALONE, MAYBE I CAN CONVINCE HER FACE-TO-FACE. MAYBE I CAN DO SOMETHING TO CHANGE HER MIND.
AND IF YOU FAIL-- YOU WILL SURELY PERISH.
PERHAPS. BUT IF I DIE, THE BLUE WILL NEVER FORGIVE HER AND MY DEATH WOULD CARRY MORE WEIGHT THAN MY LIFE MOST LIKELY EVER WILL. IT IS A SACRIFICE I WOULD WILLINGLY MAKE FOR MY PEOPLE.

THE ELITE COUNCIL WILL NOT ALLOW THE DEATH OF ONE OF THEIR COMMANDERS TO GO UNPUNISHED. THEIR FORCE IS MOST LIKELY ALREADY ON THEIR WAY.
WE KNEW THIS DAY WOULD COME.
A CIVIL WAR WITH NO LESS THAN THE FUTURE OF OUR CIVILIZATION HANGING IN THE BALANCE.
DO WE COWER AND ALLOW THE COUNCIL TO DICTATE OUR FUTURE? TELL US WHO WE SHOULD SERVE IN THE NAME OF PEACE? OR DO WE SAY NO MORE-- AND TAKE BACK WHAT IS OURS?!
WE FIGHT!
VERY WELL, LET US SHOW THEM THE POWER OF THE BLUE.

TO YOUR SHIPS SOLDIERS, SPARE NO TIME!
I TAKE PAUSE IN YOUR ORDERS, ALCER. DO YOU THINK IT WISE TO DISOBEY SIPHON'S COMMAND AND SEND A FLEET?
SIPHON'S DECISION BEARS NO LOGICAL REASONING BEYOND SUICIDE. OUR DUTY CALLS FOR US TO PROTECT THE FUTURE OF THE COUNCIL-- NO MATTER THE COST.
PERHAPS...
BUT IF A CONFLICT BREAKS OUT, THERE WILL BE BLOODSHED, BUT NO EXPLANATION WOULD SUFFICE TO THE PEOPLE. IT WOULD BE DISASTROUS.
...YET, THE PEOPLE WILL ONLY KNOW WHAT WE ALLOW THEM TO. IF ALL TRACES OF THIS REBELLION ARE ELIMINATED, THERE WILL ONLY BE OUR SIDE LEFT TO REVEAL THE TRUTH--
--WHATEVER WE DECIDE THAT MAY BE.
WITHOUT CANNON AND SIPHON, WHO WILL LEAD THESE SOLDIERS?
SOMEONE CAPABLE ENOUGH, TRUST IN THAT.

ALCER AND THE COUNCIL THINK I'M INSANE
THEY SEE MY POSITION AS ONE OF STATURE AND BELIEVE I SHOULD CALL THE SHOTS FROM THE SAFETY OF A COUNCIL CHAMBER ROOM.
THAT'S NOT HOW I WAS TRAINED
CLICK
OUR FLEET WOULD HAVE BEEN SPOTTED IN SECONDS. A BLOODBATH WOULD HAVE FOLLOWED.
THIS WAY, THE ONLY SACRIFICE TO BE MADE IS MY OWN— AND OUR PEOPLE MAY BE SWAYED BY A LEADER SUCH AS THAT ONE, WHO TAKES MATTERS INTO HIS OWN HANDS.
...OR I COULD JUST BE OUT OF MY MIND.

THE CITY IS EMPTY.
I DON'T BUY IT FOR A SECOND.
I KNOW THEY'RE WATCHING...
...WAITING.
THEY WERE EXPECTING AN ARMY— NOT ONE PERSON.
TIME TO FORCE THEIR HAND

TIME TO END THIS.

MOMENTS LATER...
WHY WOULD YOU COME HERE BY YOURSELF!?
GIVE US A MOMENT--
--ALONE.
WE NEED TO TALK, TO PUT AN END TO THIS.
SHOULD I OFF HIM?
YOU HAVE NO BUSINESS BEING HERE.
YOU LEFT ME NO CHOICE. WHAT DID YOU THINK WOULD COME OF KILLING THALASSAR? HAVE YOU LOST ALL CONTROL OF YOUR ACTIONS?
HE... HE DIDN'T FALL BY MY HANDS.
IT DOESN'T MATTER. IT HAPPENED ON YOUR WATCH. DO YOU UNDERSTAND NOW WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A LEADER? THE SACRIFICE YOU MUST MAKE?
KIANI! THEY APPROACH! A MASSIVE COUNCIL FLEET!
THEY BROUGHT THE CAVALRY AS WELL...

"...INCLUDING YOUR FATHER."

TO BE CONTINUED...

ASPEN
VOL. 2
#4
OF 4
COVER A
MICHAEL TURNER'S
FATHOM
KIANI

THE TIDES OF FATE

The Elite Council has brought war to Marielle. Siphon, leader of the Council and the greater Blue, has journeyed by himself to the embattled city in order to persuade Kiani to give up her rebellion. However, he is not alone--Killian, brother to Kiani and former rebel to the Council, has also arrived in Marielle. Yet, even worse, the Elite Council has sent a massive fleet of warships to protect Siphon and end the battle in total, even if it means destroying everything...and everyone in the process.

Vince Hernandez
Story

Oliver Nome, Nacho Arranz
Pencils & Inks

Lori Hanson
Pencil Assist

John Starr
Colors

Josh Reed
Letters

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MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM: KIANI™ Vol. 2 Issue 4

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IT WAS EASIER TO MAKE DECISIONS BEFORE I DISCOVERED I HAD A FAMILY.
BLOOD TIES CHANGE EVERYTHING.
SHH. SLEEP, LITTLE ONE.
WHEN IT WAS ONLY MYSELF, I HAD NOTHING TO LIVE FOR— AND I LIKED IT THAT WAY.
I FELT FREE TO MAKE MY OWN DECISIONS.
YET, IT WAS ALL A LIE.
I WON'T ALLOW YOU TO SHARE KIANI'S FATE, NO MATTER WHAT KILLIAN DOES. WE MUST START OVER. WHEN YOU AWAKEN, WE WILL BE FREE.
FREEDOM WAS NEVER MINE TO BE HAD..

THE ABANDONED CITY OF MARIELLE.

...NOT WHILE THE TIES OF FAMILY CONTINUE TO BIND ME.

KILLIAN IS HERE?

YOU BROUGHT MY FATHER INTO THIS?!
HE IS HERE ON HIS *OWN* VOLITION!
AND THE LEGION OF SHIPS HE SWIMS ALONGSIDE?! I SUPPOSE *THOSE* HE STOLE AS WELL?
I HAD NO PART IN HIS CHOICE, BUT YOU SHOULD LOOK TO THE MOTIVES BEHIND HIS DECISION.
YOUR *OWN* FATHER-- YOUR FLESH AND BLOOD-- HAS TAKEN STANCE AGAINST YOUR CAUSE. A CAUSE *HE* BEGAN!
WHEN WILL *YOU* FINALLY GROW UP AS WELL?

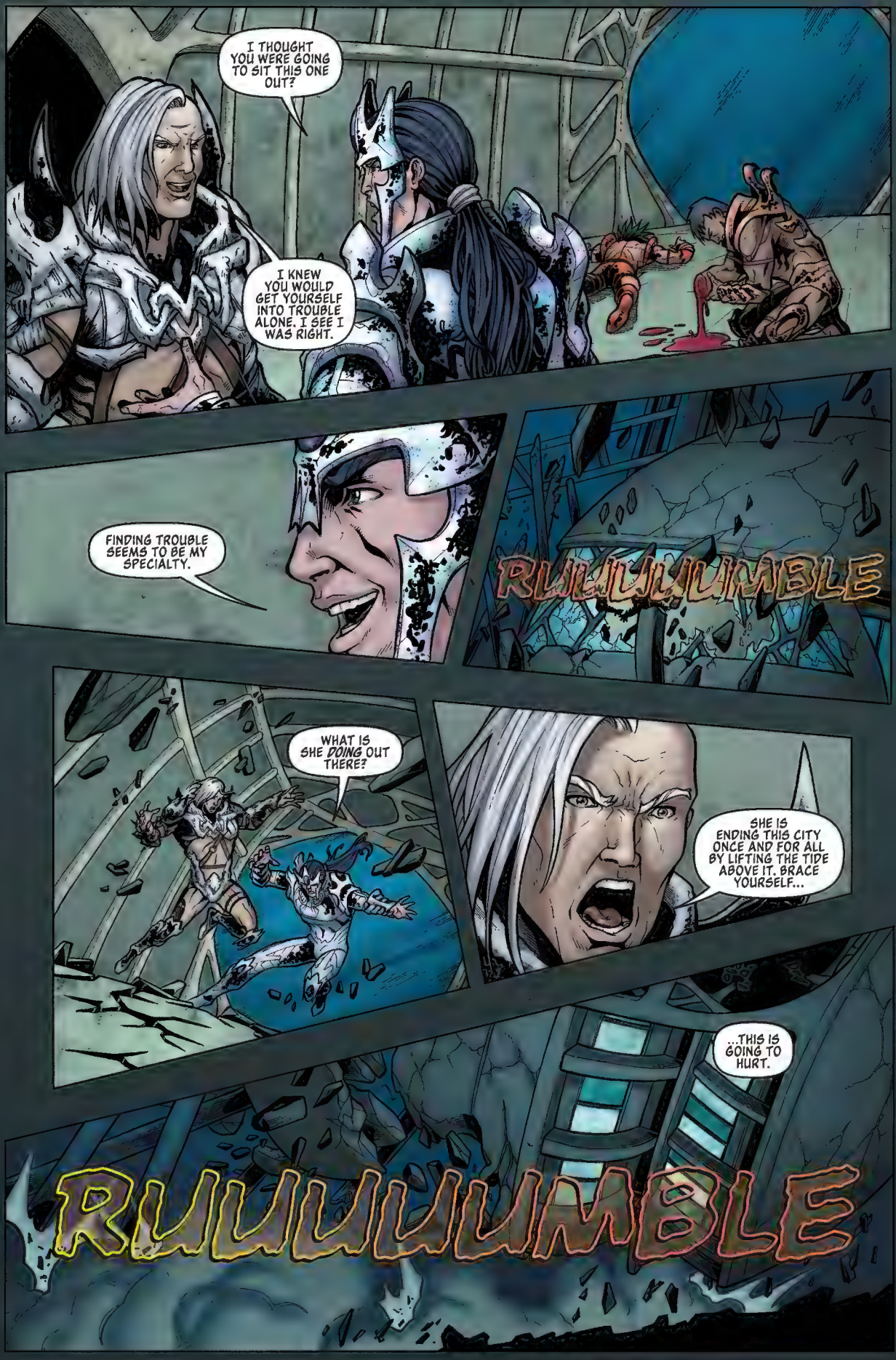
KIANI!
QUIET!
CRAACK
WE MUST DO SOMETHING! WE CANNOT TAKE ON THIS SIZEABLE A FORCE ON OUR OWN! WE NEED TO RETREAT!
LET'S OFF HIM AND MOVE ON!
WE'RE NOT KILLING SIPHON!
LET'S PROVE TO THE COUNCIL HOW FRAGILE THEY REALLY ARE BY ENDING THEIR LEADER'S LIFE!
NO! HE IS MY... THE PEOPLE WOULD NEVER FORGIVE US FOR SUCH AN ACTION. WE WILL TAKE HIM HOSTAGE.
...
FINE, THEN.
I WASN'T ASKING.
KEEP HIM HERE. DO NOT LET ANYONE IN.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO PUT AN END TO THIS.

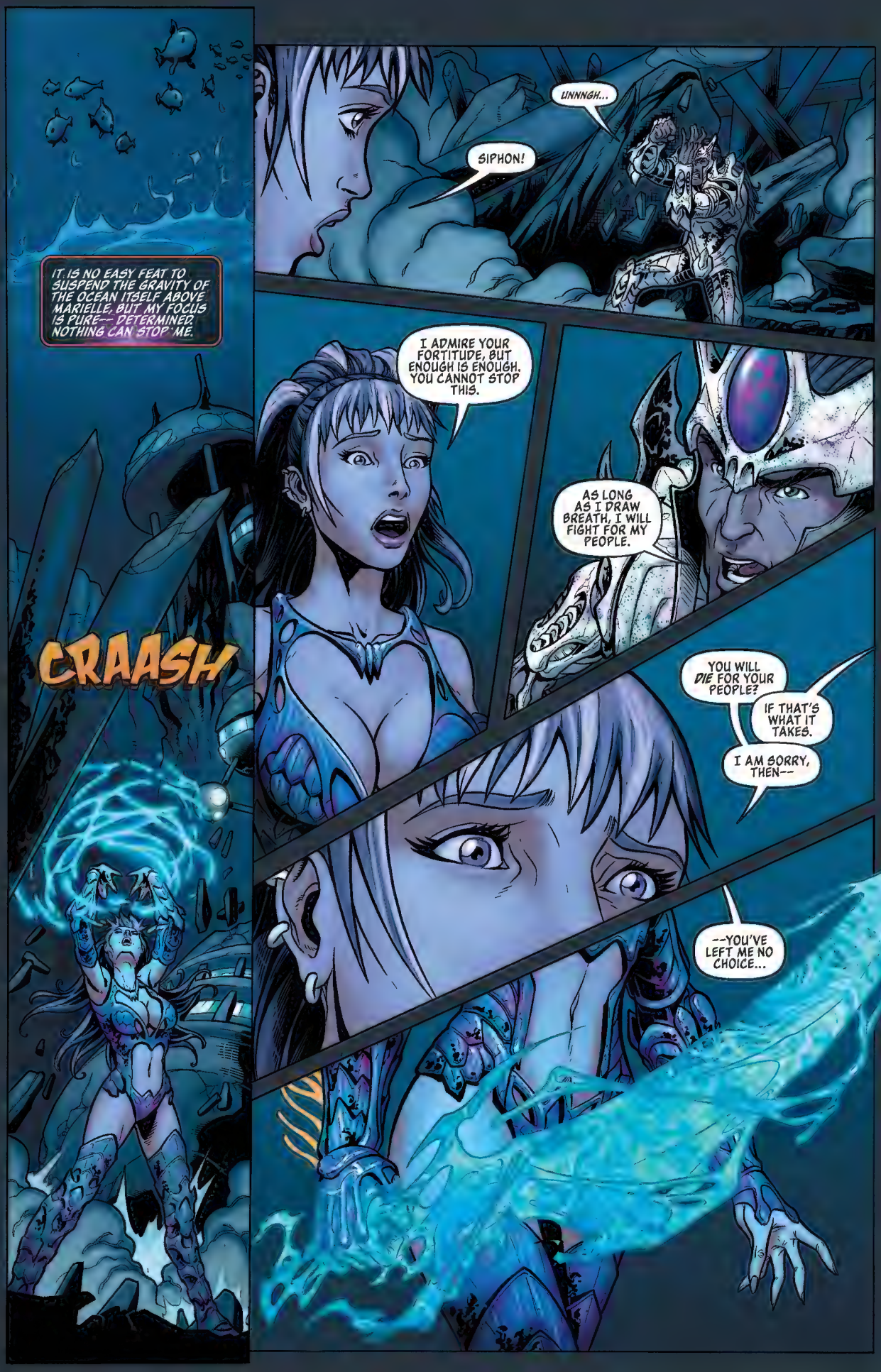
THOSE CLOSE TO ME ASSUME I CHOSE THE CITY OF MARIELLE BECAUSE IT HOLDS SOME VALUE TO ME. FOR IN MY MORE NAIVE YOUTH, I ONCE BELIEVED THIS WAS MY HOMELAND.
HOWEVER, I CHOSE THIS LAND NOT BECAUSE OF THE MEANING IT HOLDS--
--BUT RATHER ITS STRATEGIC VALUE.
IT IS THE ONLY BLUE CITY THAT HAS EVER BEEN COMPLETELY ABANDONED, AND WHILE WE ARE ONLY A SMALL YET SIZEABLE FORCE, THE CITY ITSELF IS OUR ADVANTAGE.
RUMBLE RUMBLE
IT IS TIME TO PUT IT TO USE...

BY LIFTING THE OCEAN ABOVE THE CITY, THE COUNCIL'S FLEET IS HELPLESS.
THEY HAVE NOWHERE TO GO BUT DOWN...
...FOR THE BLUE ARE ONE WITH THE WATER.
FOR BETTER OR WORSE.

WHAT... IS THAT?
WHAT IS SHE DOING?! WITH HER OUT THERE, I SHOULD KILL YOU HERE AND NOW-- THAT WILL REALLY MAKE A CHANGE.
KIANI SAID--
--I KNOW WHAT SHE SAID, FOOL! I WAS HERE!
YOU THINK WE'RE ANY BETTER THAN HIM?! WE ARE ALSO HELD HOSTAGE TO HER REASONING BECAUSE OF HER POWER! OUR CAUSES HAVE NOT BEEN ALIGNED FOR SOME TIME!
YOU THINK ALL THIS IS FOR A CAUSE? YOU ARE TRULY A FOOL, THEN.
CRACK
DO NOT SPEAK AGAIN OR I WILL--
ARRRGHHH!

YOU DO NOT GIVE ORDERS TO THE LEADER OF THE ELITE COUNCIL.
KILLIAN! STAY BACK! HE'S OURS NOW!
CHOODM
THWOOOM
CRUUUNCH
POOR CHOICE OF WEAPON, ERGON.
AHHHHHHHHHH!


I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO SIT THIS ONE OUT?
I KNEW YOU WOULD GET YOURSELF INTO TROUBLE ALONE. I SEE I WAS RIGHT.
FINDING TROUBLE SEEMS TO BE MY SPECIALTY.
RUUUUMBLE
WHAT IS SHE *DOING* OUT THERE?
SHE IS ENDING THIS CITY ONCE AND FOR ALL BY LIFTING THE TIDE ABOVE IT. BRACE YOURSELF...
...THIS IS GOING TO HURT.
RUUUUMBLE

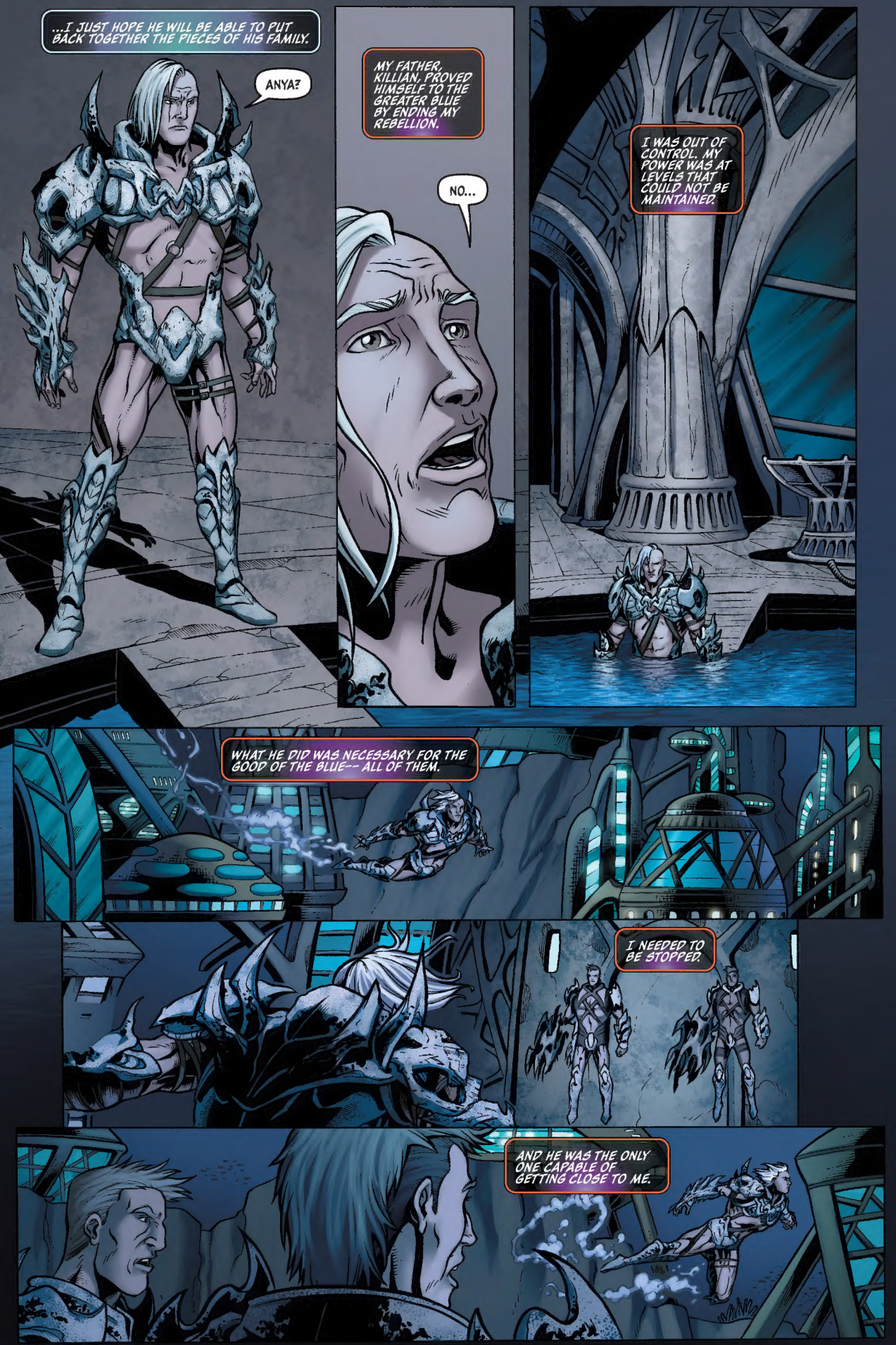

IT IS NO EASY FEAT TO SUSPEND THE GRAVITY OF THE OCEAN ITSELF ABOVE MARIELLE, BUT MY FOCUS IS PURE-- DETERMINED. NOTHING CAN STOP ME.
CRAASH
UNNNGH...
SIPHON!
I ADMIRE YOUR FORTITUDE, BUT ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. YOU CANNOT STOP THIS.
AS LONG AS I DRAW BREATH, I WILL FIGHT FOR MY PEOPLE.
YOU WILL *DIE* FOR YOUR PEOPLE?
IF THAT'S WHAT IT TAKES.
I AM SORRY, THEN--
--YOU'VE LEFT ME NO CHOICE...

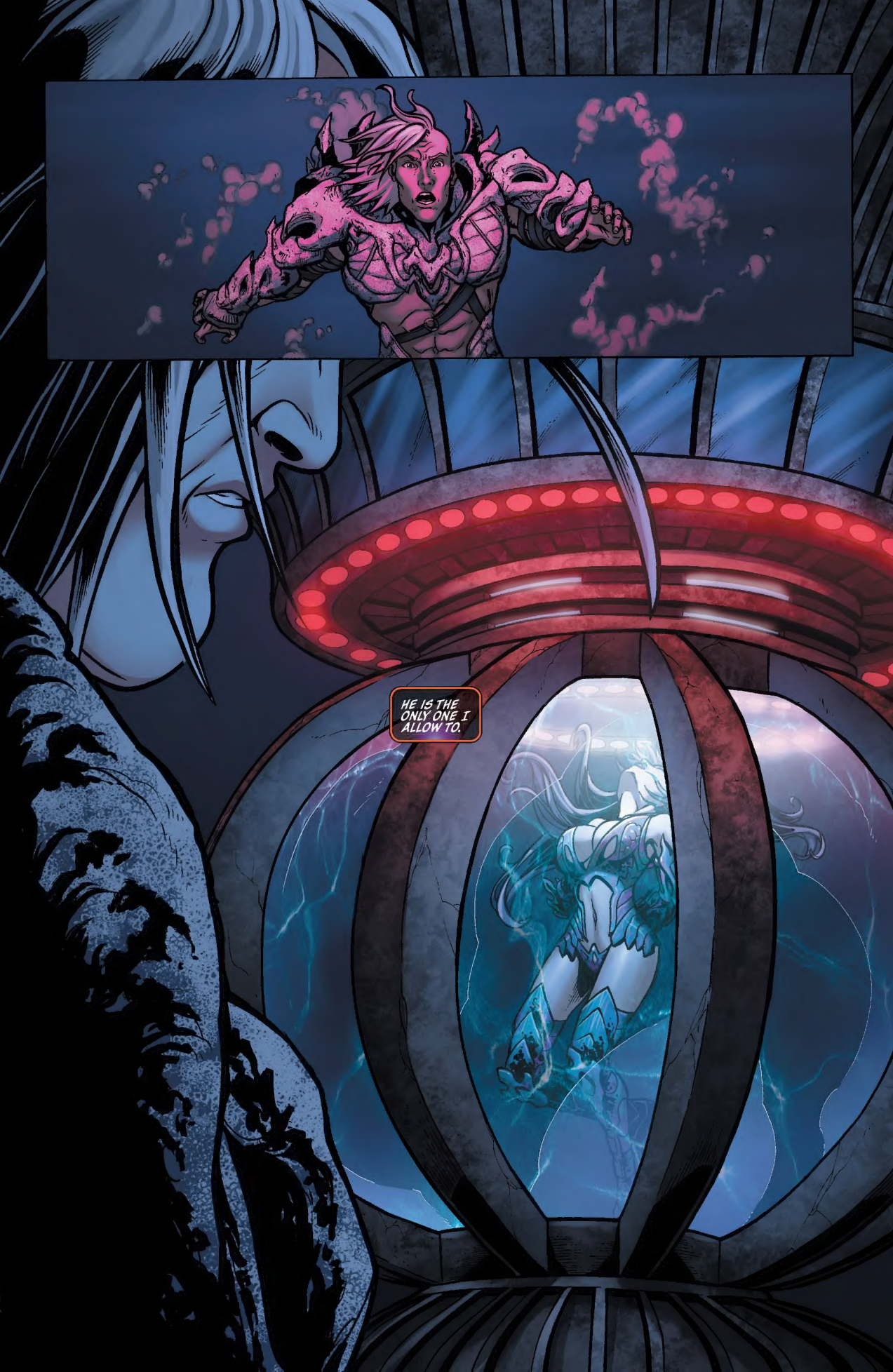
...YOU WILL ALWAYS BE MY BROTHER, SIPHON.
ARRRRGGGHH!
I'M... SORRY.
SO AM I--
FATHER--?

CRACK
UNNNH!
THUD
RUUUUUMBLE
YOU SHOULD HAVE COME TO ME, KIANI. I AM YOUR FATHER, YOUR *FLESH AND BLOOD.* I WOULD ALWAYS SUPPORT YOU-- THROUGH *ANYTHING!*
-:GASP!:-
YOU ARE POWERFUL, YES. YET, WITHOUT THE WATER, WE ARE MORTAL, WITH NOTHING TO DRAW UPON--
--DO YOU UNDERSTAND NOW?
NNNNGGGHH...

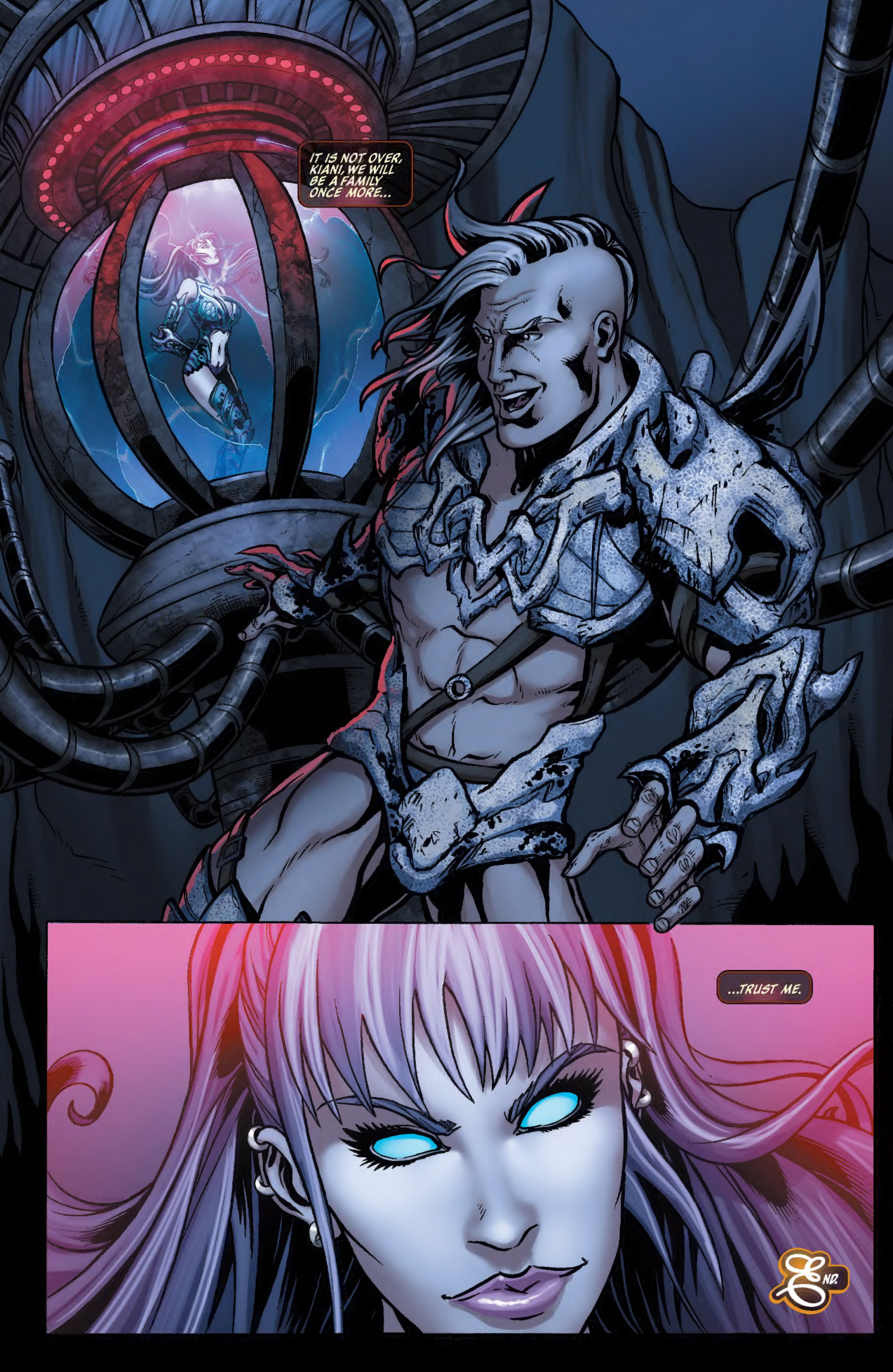
IT IS OVER.

EPILOGUE.
I WAS WRONG ABOUT A LOT OF THINGS.
BUT NONE MORE-SO THAN MY TRUST IN KILLIAN.
HIS ACTIONS HAVE PROVEN MUCH MORE THAN HIS WORDS.
AT THE NEXT COUNCIL SESSION, I PLAN TO MOTION FOR KILLIAN TO RESUME CANNON HAWKE'S DUTIES AS ELITE COMMANDER. IT IS TIME. THE BLUE DESERVE SOMEONE WHO WILL FIGHT FOR THEM.
I HAVE THE WOUND TO PROVE IT...
SIPHON, ARE YOU SURE? WILL THE BLUE FOLLOW--
--THEY WILL FOLLOW SOMEONE WHO HAS CONVICTION. NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE OR WHERE THEY CAME FROM.


...I JUST HOPE HE WILL BE ABLE TO PUT BACK TOGETHER THE PIECES OF HIS FAMILY.
ANYA?
MY FATHER, KILLIAN, PROVED HIMSELF TO THE GREATER BLUE BY ENDING MY REBELLION.
NO...
I WAS OUT OF CONTROL. MY POWER WAS AT LEVELS THAT COULD NOT BE MAINTAINED.
WHAT HE DID WAS NECESSARY FOR THE GOOD OF THE BLUE-- ALL OF THEM.
I NEEDED TO BE STOPPED.
AND HE WAS THE ONLY ONE CAPABLE OF GETTING CLOSE TO ME.


HE IS THE ONLY ONE I ALLOW TO.

KIANI...
...I AM... SORRY.
I NEVER MEANT FOR THIS TO HAPPEN... NOT IN THIS WAY. I ONLY HOPE YOU KNOW IT HAD TO BE DONE AS SO.
...BUT IN WHAT YOU WILL BECOME.
YOU ARE A TRUE MARVEL-- POWERFUL BEYOND WORDS. HOWEVER, YOUR TRUE STRENGTH IS NOT IN WHAT YOU CAN DO...


IT IS NOT OVER, KIANI, WE WILL BE A FAMILY ONCE MORE...
...TRUST ME.
END.